

Hafa Adai!

Sablan, Manglona likely to be elected delegation chairs. **PAGE 2**
\$20K bail set for man accused of beating his elderly mother. **PAGE 3**

\$1

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Palacios: Brace yourself



FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios expresses appreciation to the people who showed up at their potluck gathering to celebrate the smooth and successful transition and inauguration activities of the new administration, at the Civic Center in Susupe Sunday. Also in the photo seated at the same table is Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang.

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios said Sunday that people in the CNMI should brace themselves because

there's a lot of information about the financial state of the CNMI that the administration is still trying to determine.

» **'First 100 days will be very challenging'**

"The transition reports are in, but there are still other critical information that need to be fleshed out," said Palacios in a

See **PALACIOS** on Page 4

Spay, neuter clinic from Jan. 24 to 26

By **LEIGH GASES**
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REPORTER

Spay and neuter services for dogs and cats will be available once again at the Saipan Mayor's Office Dog Shelter in As Perdi-do from Jan. 24 to 26, thanks to the collaborative efforts of Boonie Babies Saipan, Guam Animals In Need, or GAIN, and the Office of the Mayor of Saipan.

The price for surgeries is \$50 per male cat, and \$75 per female cat, male dog, or female dog.

Log on to www.tinyurl.com/boonie-babies and complete the survey to sign up for services. If space is still

See **SPAY** on Page 4



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Lauren Cabrera holds a dog that was spayed during the spay/neuter clinic last August at the Saipan Mayor's Office Dog Shelter. The dog was eventually adopted out. This Jan. 24 to 26, a three-day spay/neuter clinic will be held at the shelter once again.

UOG joins research to find way to harness energy from the sea

Guam households have historically been paying a high cost of electricity because most power plants on the island still use imported and expensive fossil fuel.

Imagine if seawater could be harnessed to produce hydrogen for electricity in Guam.

Researchers across the country have spent years looking into ways to split

See **UOG** on Page 4



UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

From left, David Patrick Crisostomo, aquaculture specialist at the University of Guam Sea Grant; Bastian Bentlage, associate professor of bioinformatics at the Marine Lab, UOG; and John Francis Limtiaco, assistant professor of chemistry at the College of Natural and Applied Sciences; are photographed on Jan. 12 on campus with Pago Bay in the background.

INSIDE



BUSINESS

Tiana's Cafe makes guests at Valentino Hotel on Rota right at home with their delectable menu.

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ASIA

A plane crashes while attempting to land in Nepal, killing at least 66 of the 72 people aboard.

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LIFE & STYLE

R'Bonney Gabriel, the first Filipino American to win Miss USA, is crowned Miss Universe.

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Local

Sablan, Manglona likely to be elected delegation chairs

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Rep. John Paul Sablan (Ind-Saipan) will likely be elected chairman of the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation, while Sen. Donald M. Manglona (Ind-Rota) may be chosen as chairman of the Rota Legislative Delegation.

The SNILD members will hold an organizational session this Friday at 10am in the House of Representatives chamber on Capital Hill. At that time, SNILD members are expected to elect Sablan

as chairman, Rep. Roman Benavente (Ind-Saipan) as vice chairman, and Sen. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan) as floor leader, according to sources on the Hill.

The RLD members, on the other hand, will hold an organizational session at the Rota Mayor's Office conference room this Monday, Jan. 23, at 10am. At that session, RLD members may likely select Sen. Donald Manglona as chairman and Rep. Julie Marie Atalig Ogo (Ind-Rota) as vice chair, the same sources said. The other member of RLD is Sen. Dennis



Rep. John Paul Sablan (Ind-Saipan), second from left, held roadside campaign with Rep. Manny T. Castro (Ind-Saipan), left, in this file photo across Joeten-Kiyu Library in Susupe last Nov. 8 general elections. Both Sablan and Castro won House seats, representing Precinct 2.

C. Mendiola (R-Rota).

The Tinian and Aguiguan Legislative Delegation will hold an organizational session tomorrow, Wednesday, at 1:30pm, in the Senate chamber.

Saipan Tribune has no information yet as to will likely be elected as chairman of the TALD.

The TALD members are Sens. Francisco Q. Cruz, Karl R. King-Nabors, and Jude U. Hofschneider, and Rep. Patrick H. San Nicolas. All are Republicans.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE



A Northern Mariana Islands Social Service JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

(1) PART-TIME SHELTER WORKER

For more information, job description and an application, visit the Karidat main office at the Sister Remedios Community Center, Chalan Kanoa.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED: A complete application form, copy of diploma/degree, resume/bio-data; current police clearance within 6 months and a copy of a valid CNMI Driver's license.

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500 Sails, Adam's Marine Seminars offer OUPV captain's license class

By **CHRYSTAL MARINO**
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
Correspondent

Helping aspiring mariners take the first step toward obtaining their own captain's license, 500 Sails has teamed up with the U.S.-based Adams' Marine Seminars to provide what's called OUPV captain's license classes that will allow students to earn their license to

be able to captain a boat that's up to six passengers.

The first seminar, held yesterday at the 500 Sails boatyard in Lower Base, Puerto Rico on Saipan, filled the 24-seat regulation of the U.S. Coast Guard, with individuals of various ages attending the class, and even had several names on a waiting list, showing the demand for such a class.

Chris Adams of Adams' Marine Seminars leads the course, which began yesterday and continues daily from 8am to around 4pm. The classes will cover topics such as learning navigation rules, charting plotting, steering based on compass guidance, international and inland rules for boating vessels.

The course duration lasts eight days for the six-packs captain's license, and then the upgrade sessions require an additional three days and there are tests for each course. The classes are under



500 Sails' Culture of Maritime Training Center director Marjorie Daria and Chris Adams of Adams' Marine Seminars pose for Saipan Tribune inside the 500 Sails classroom in Lower Base.

500 Sails' Culture of Maritime Training Center, one of the two sub-divisions under 500 Sails that focuses on ways to help train individuals interested in maritime.

500 Sails' Marjorie Daria, director of the organization's Culture of Maritime Training Center, said the OUPV track, or Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessel, is more popularly known as a

six-pack captain's license that allows students to earn their license to be able to captain a boat that's up to six passengers, excluding their crew. ...This will allow them to operate their own dive boat, take tourists out on the water, work on getting their merchant mariner's credential, which is what the license will help them accomplish, so they can work on ships out there."

Villagomez underscores need to find ways to keep CNMI economy afloat

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

House of Representatives Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) said they need to find ways to keep the CNMI economy afloat.

In an interview last week, Villagomez said the main thing that everyone in the House is concerned about is where the CNMI is at financially as a government and if it's capable of providing services to the public.

He said the economy is the fuel to the services so there is

a need to bring in the revenue and allow that to provide these public services.

"That's the priority right now," said the speaker, adding that he cannot wait for the day when Gov. Arnold I.

Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang open up the books so they can see where the CNMI is at financially and work from there.

Villagomez noted that one of the CNMI's saving graces these past couple of years was all the federal funding that the Commonwealth has received from federal partners, U.S. Con-

gress, and federal government.

He said it will be good to see where the CNMI government is now with those fundings, most especially with the American Rescue Plan Act funds.

Last Thursday, Villagomez and some House and Senate members met with Palacios and Apatang where they discussed the state of the CNMI's economy.

With respect to House committees' leadership, Villagomez said that, just like what he did in the 22nd House, he will also allow the committee chairs and members to function in their own ways.



Villagomez

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\$20K bail set for man accused of beating his elderly mother

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court has imposed a \$20,000 cash bail on a man accused of beating his elderly mother.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho imposed last Friday a \$20,000 cash bail on Jason D. Yamada, who allegedly beat his elderly mother because he didn't want to help her change her soiled adult diaper.

Aside from the soiled di-

aper incident last week, the victim alleges that Yamada had beaten her before and had threatened to kill her and her husband numerous times.

Yamada, 27, is facing charges of disturbing the peace, assault, assault and battery, assault with a dangerous weapon, and senior citizen physical abuse and/or mental cruelty and domestic violence.

The defendant was remanded back to Department of Corrections custody after failing to post bail. He was ordered to

return to court on Jan. 20 for a preliminary hearing while his arraignment is set for Jan. 30.

According to court documents, Department of Public Safety officers were dispatched to a residence in As Lito last Jan. 11 to respond to an assault complaint. At the scene, DPS officers met with an elderly, disabled woman wearing a T-shirt and diapers.

The woman told responding officers that she was afraid of her son, Yamada, because he had just threatened to kill her

and her husband. Responding officers noted that the woman was crying and shaking as she talked to police.

The victim said that around 10am that day, she asked Yamada to help her change her diapers because she soiled them but he refused and told her, "Better you die."

The victim's husband, in a separate interview, told po-

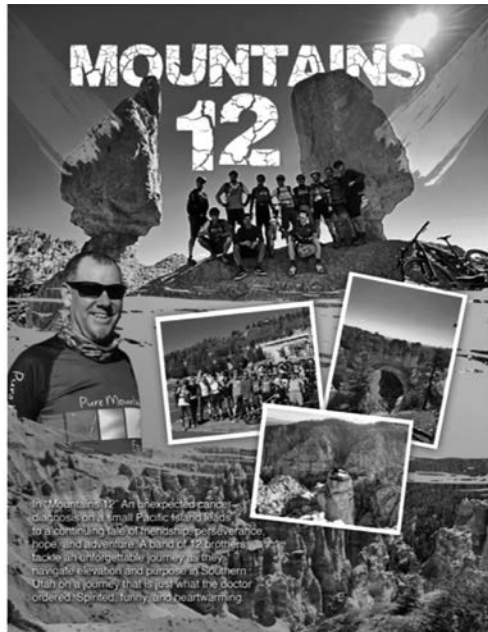
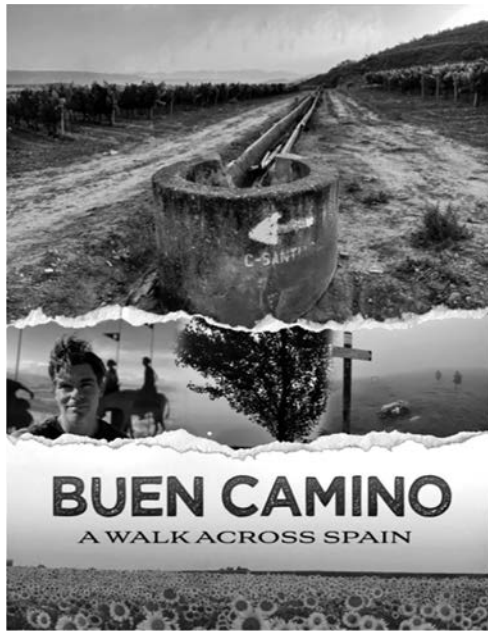
lice that Yamada had told him earlier that day to leave the elderly woman home instead of bringing her to work. However, moment later, the victim's husband said he overheard Yamada say he was going to kill his wife and him, which prompted him to seek police assistance.

The victim's husband also told police that there were

instances in October and December 2022 when Yamada would slap the victim multiple times and would admit to what he did because he said, "She's useless anyway."

The victim's husband also told police that the elderly woman was confined at the Commonwealth Health Center back in December because Yamada had slapped her.

Film night at AMP Visitors Center



Flame Tree TV and KSPN2 News will premiere two short films on Wednesday, Jan. 18, at 7pm at the American Memorial Park Visitors Center Theatre. Doors open at 6:30pm and admission is free.

Buen Camino is the story of an epic solo walk across Spain. Saipan's Chris Nelson hits the trail for 37 days and 1,000 kilometers as he follows

in the footsteps of Charlemagne and crosses the Iberian Peninsula on the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage. Along "the way" he finds equal doses of adventure, friendship, and a lot of life lessons. Inspirational. This film has a run time of about 30 minutes.

In *Mountains 12*, an unexpected cancer diagnosis on a

small Pacific Island leads to a continuing tale of friendship, perseverance, hope, and adventure. A band of 12 brothers tackle an unforgettable journey as they navigate elevation and purpose in southern Utah on a journey that is just what the doctor ordered. Spirited, funny, and heartwarming. This film has a run time of about 30 minutes. (PR)

Australia finalizing new security pact with Pacific neighbor

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—The leaders of Australia and neighboring Papua New Guinea said Thursday they are finalizing a new security treaty—a move that comes as a challenge to China's growing assertiveness in the region.

Last year, China signed its own security pact with the nearby Solomon Islands, raising alarm that it could lead to a military buildup in the South Pacific region.

Australia and PNG haven't released details of their planned new treaty, but Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said he expected negotiations to conclude in April and the treaty to be signed in June.

Albanese said the treaty would be based on the deep trust between the two nations. The people of Papua New Guinea showed heroism and

humanity during World War II battles, he said.

"In the years ahead, Australia and Papua New Guinea have a chance to honor our shared history of service in the cause of peace—by adding to it," Albanese said. "Deepening our defense ties and enhancing our national security cooperation, and achieving a swift conclusion to negotiations on a Bilateral Security Treaty."

Albanese's remarks were part of the first address to the Papua New Guinea Parliament by a foreign leader since the nation of 10 million gained independence in 1975.

"Australia and Papua New Guinea are the closest of neighbors, we are the greatest of friends," Albanese said.

Albanese said the treaty would work to address PNG's needs, including strengthening the justice system and resolving law-and-order challenges.

In response, PNG Prime Minister James Marape welcomed Albanese and said the two leaders would meet later Thursday to finetune their relationship, including "support for the law and justice sector, including police, military exchanges."

Marape said the safety of both countries was intertwined. He said Australia was more than just a bilateral partner and was a parent nation, because PNG had been under Australia's administration before gaining independence.

"One cannot talk about the Indo-Pacific without progressing the Papua New Guinea agenda because we are right in the heart and the center of this confluence, the Indo-Pacific confluence," Marape said. "In order for PNG to participate in a safer Indo-Pacific region, Papua New Guinea herself must be stronger economically."



LEARNING SELF-SUFFICIENCY

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Eighteen Koblerville Elementary School students complete their first Marianas School Pride Campus Beautification Project last Dec. 22, 2022. The project aims to encourage students to be self-sufficient and enjoy being out in nature doing hands-on activities.



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation



JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

JVA No. 23-041
REANNOUNCEMENT

Opening Date: January 4, 2023
Closing Date: January 18, 2023

POSITION TITLE:
DEPARTMENT:
LOCATION:
ANNUAL SALARY:
CONTRACT:
POSITION(S):

Trades Assistant
Rota Water Division
Rota, Northern Mariana Islands, USA
\$16,742.00 - \$22,602.00 per annum, Non-Exempt
Not Contracted
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The incumbent will be under the direct supervision of the Resident Manager or his/her designee.

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- Responds to trouble calls as needed.
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- Gathers, cleans and returns equipment, materials and supplies used.
- Cleans and maintains work site after project or repair work is complete.
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- Performing daily well and pump station facility maintenance, cleaning and monitoring;
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- Utilizing digging equipment for locating and repairing leaks;
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Skills in: Providing customer service; Reading maps and drawings; Operating heavy and light equipment machinery, hand and power tools required of assigned area; Adhering to safety procedures and safe work practices; Prioritizing tasks and managing time for efficiency; Identifying issues and solving problems; Providing attention to detail; Taking equipment readings and recording data; Maintaining activity logs and reports; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

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UK, Japan sign defense deal amid rising concern about China

LONDON (AP)—The leaders of Britain and Japan signed a defense agreement last Wednesday that could see troops deployed to each other's countries.

The two countries are strengthening military ties amid growing concern about China's increasing military assertiveness and designs toward Taiwan, which it considers a renegade province.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida formally signed the agreement in the symbolic setting of the Tower

of London fortress. The British government said the it "cemented our commitment to the Indo-Pacific" region.

"The relationship between our two countries is stronger than ever, not just across trade and security, but also our values," Sunak told his Japanese counterpart.

Kishida, referring to the importance of security and cooperation between Japan and the U.K., said he hoped he and Sunak would have a "strategic discussion."

The Reciprocal Access Agreement, Japan's first de-

fense agreement with a European nation, allows the two Group of Seven countries to hold joint military exercises. The deal had been in the works for years and was discussed when Kishida visited then-Prime Minister Boris Johnson in London in May.

The British government said it will allow the armed forces of the U.K. and Japan "to plan and deliver larger and more complex military exercises and deployments."

The agreement reflects a new "Indo-Pacific tilt" in Britain's foreign policy following



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, center, and Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, next to him, arrive at the Tower of London, Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2023.

the country's departure from the European Union in 2020. Britain sees Japan as its key East Asian ally.

"In this increasingly competitive world, it is more important than ever that democratic societies continue to stand shoulder to shoulder as we navigate the unprecedented global challenges of our

time," Sunak said.

During their meeting at the Tower of London, a 1,000-year-old former palace and prison that houses the Crown Jewels, the leaders viewed Japanese armor presented to King James in 1613 by Shogun Tokugawa Hidetada of Japan to mark the first-ever trade agree-

ment between England and Japan.

Japan has joined Western nations in condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine and imposing sanctions against Moscow. Japan also has supplied Ukraine with helmets and other non-lethal military aid.

Japan is concerned Russia's invasion of Ukraine could have an impact in East Asia, where China's military has grown increasingly assertive and threatened to unite with Taiwan by force if necessary.

Concerned about rapid weapons advancement in China and North Korea, Japan in December adopted key security and defense reforms, including a counter-strike capability that makes a break from the self-defense-only principle it has maintained since its defeat in World War II.

SPAY

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available, you will be assigned a slot.

Drop-offs for the clinic are at 7:30am and 8am only to ensure that a licensed veterinarian is available to examine each animal prior to beginning the day of surgeries, to ensure their health and safety.

According to Lauren Cabrera, co-founder of the Boonie Flight Project in Guam and a volunteer clinic coordinator, "The clinic plans to sterilize 20 animals per day, thanks to the services of visiting veterinarian Dr. Brenda Smith from GAIN and volunteer veterinarian Dr. Whitney Collins, along with [SMO's Dog Control Program] Dog Control staff and other volunteers from GAIN and Boonie Babies Rescue."

When asked if there will be more clinics in the future, Cabrera said, "I do hope there will be more of these collaborations in the future. The only way to get the dog population controlled is by partnering with the government. They

have been an enormous support to getting this spay/neuter program off the ground since [former] Mayor Apatang's generous contributions last summer, letting us use their space and equipment."

Cabrera has worked closely with the Dog Control Program and spoke with Martin Pangelinan, manager of the program, who coordinated with new Saipan Mayor Ramon "RB" Camacho for the use of the new shelter for the clinic.

She expressed appreciation for Camacho's support, saying, "I want to highlight how thrilled we are to have the new mayor so interested in supporting these efforts right away. We are very grateful! We are grateful to have the support of Mayor Camacho in continuing the good work of [then] mayor Apatang in working to control Saipan's dog population."

Last August and September 2022, a spay/neuter clinic was held at the Saipan Mayor's Office Dog Shelter and on Tinian as well, which sterilized 500 animals over the course of four weeks. For a Tinian clinic this time around, Cabrera said they

are unable to make their way there due to the short amount of time, but that they hope to return there in the future.

"Spaying and neutering animals is important for many reasons. It can improve the behavior of your animal, making them less prone to wander, looking for a mate. Additionally, it can reduce the risk of life-threatening medical conditions such as a uterine infection (pyometra) and cancer. Most importantly, it will minimize the production of kittens and puppies on our beautiful island, leading to less animal suffering," said Cabrera.

If you are interested in volunteering to assist the clinic, reach out to spayneutercnmi@gmail.com.

GAIN's mission is to find permanent, loving homes for Guam's homeless and abused animals. In an effort to help control the island's pet population, low-cost spay and neuter services are also offered.

Boonie Babies Saipan is a nonprofit organization with a mission to rescue, educate, rehabilitate, and relocate boonie dogs from the CNMI.

the ARPA spending plan with U.S. Treasury.

Palacios on Sunday acknowledged the hard work that is on the table before him, Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang, and legislative leaders. "It's [going to] be a lot of hard work ahead for Dave and I and the rest of the team," said Palacios, adding that he is confident that the administration can pull through these challenges.

At the moment, he and Apatang don't have their individual offices and desks. The offices of the governor and lieutenant governor are undergoing minor renovations.

"We still manage to work together and maybe that's a good omen because we're both sharing the same round table at the governor's old office. I can't do anything secretly or he can't do anything confidentially," Palacios joked, drawing laughter from the crowd.

reconciliation has determined that the CNMI received \$481.8 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds but, as of Dec. 27, 2022, it has overspent and overcommitted and has a deficit of \$86 million.

ARPA was used to fund disaster-related expenditures pending reimbursements, amounting to approximately \$48.7 million. Upon reimbursements, the transition report disclosed, the ARPA deficit will be reduced to \$37.4 million.

Saying the CNMI government's financial situation is dire, the transition team report stated that the months and years ahead will not be without hardship.

Among the recommendations of the transition report are to discontinue the 25% additional retiree pension payment until the government stabilizes its current financial state, and initiate a revision to

PALACIOS

From page 1

brief speech during a potluck gathering by his and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang's supporters at the Civic Center in Supe to celebrate the smooth and successful transition and inauguration activities for the new administration.

The governor said they are working on getting all the information and they hope to begin next week the task of putting together a general picture of the Commonwealth government.

"But I'll tell you it's [going to] be a challenging first 100 days. But we will get there. We'll do our best and work hard," Palacios said.

According to a 2022 transition report on the Department of Finance submitted last Jan. 4 to the Palacios-Apatang administration, a preliminary

UOG

From page 1

seawater, which Guam has an unlimited supply of, into hydrogen and oxygen. It's a process called "seawater splitting." With the split, hydrogen can be used for producing or delivering electricity.

But using seawater has also stumped scientists because, as National Science Foundation researchers and others have found, chloride ions in seawater turn into toxic chlorine gas, and can quickly corrode equipment used to produce energy.

The challenge has been to figure out how to use seawater in a way that does not harm the environment, will not be costly, and will not cause power production equipment to degrade quickly.

Research related to this field is now reaching Guam shores.

The U.S. Department of Energy is providing the University of Guam with funding for faculty and student researchers to work alongside engineers and scientists at DOE's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory to gain a fundamental understanding of seawater electrolysis. The research on reductive and oxidative reactions will build a foundation for fundamental research and scientific training at UOG while expanding the fundamental knowledge necessary for carbon-neutral hydrogen fuel generation and storage technologies.

DOE will also fund summer research experience at PNNL's lab, starting with two UOG students and John Francis Limtiaco, assistant professor of chemistry, in 2023. Five UOG students will be allowed to experience PNNL research during the summer in 2024 and 2025.

\$1.69M for UOG

DOE's Office of Science is providing \$1.695 million in research funding to UOG. PNNL will receive \$555,000 for the three-year project through 2025. The laboratory is a leading center for technological innovation in renewable energy.

The research at UOG will be led by Limtiaco, who is the principal investigator. His group will seek answers to the question: "Can the organic compounds present in seawater protect the anode from deactivation by steering the selectivity of the electrolysis away from the

chlorine evolution reaction while increasing selectivity towards the production of value-added energy carrier molecules?"

The Office of Research & Sponsored Programs at UOG assisted Limtiaco, who applied for DOE research funding for the first time.

"It was very encouraging to see him commit to this very important project for our island," said Dr. Pamela Peralta Taitano, director of Contracts and Grants, UOG.

\$400K Ocean Energy Systems research

The Water Power Technologies Office at DOE also recently announced \$400,000 in funding, initially for two years, that will be provided toward research at UOG to explore the potential for ocean energy systems, such as ocean thermal energy conversion and wave energy technology, to power a proposed Guam Aquaculture Innovation Center.

UOG will partner with DOE's PNNL and Sandia National Laboratories to assess the infrastructure requirements, environmental impact considerations and the economic and regulatory viability of deploying ocean energy systems in Guam.

During the initial two years, UOG research will look at obtaining more information to solidify a plan of action for the best option and implementation of a marine energy system, said David Patrick Crisostomo, aquaculture specialist with the Sea Grant Program.

Ocean thermal energy is a strong possibility because Guam has access to deep ocean water relatively close to shore, Crisostomo said. And there is also the possibility for wave energy to be used as a source of energy, he added.

"The long-term dream is an Aquaculture Innovation Center that is reliant on clean energy. The expansion of this dream is to add ocean thermal energy or other marine energy systems to Guam's ability to produce clean energy for the entire island," said Crisostomo.

Fleur de Peralta, senior adviser with the Risk & Environmental Assessment Group, Energy & Environment Directorate at PNNL, said: "The diversity within the PNNL and UOG teams will strengthen the outcome of both projects as we adapt and learn from each other to gain valuable knowledge on the feasibility of harnessing hydrogen from Guam's ocean waters and deploying ocean energy systems as additional sources of clean energy for the island." (UOG)

NMC-CREES presents at nat'l ECOP 4-H leadership meeting

Northern Marianas College-Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Services interim dean Patty Coleman and NMC-CREES Family, Community, and Youth Development State program leader Tayna Belyeu-Camacho recently convened with members of the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy's National 4-H Leadership Committee in Kona, Hawaii after an invitation to present on the 4-H Marianas program in the CNMI.

"The meeting was a great opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations about the various positive youth development programs

being implemented across the jurisdictions, and more importantly, identifying tangible areas for collaboration and regional work," Coleman said.

During their presentation, Coleman and Belyeu-Camacho lauded the youth-driven approach and the over 100 youth volunteers of the 4-H Marianas in enhancing the capacity of other youths and elevating the voices of their peers locally, regionally, and nationally. They also emphasized the importance of leveraging partnerships to enhance current efforts and empowering young people to play an active role in their community as it builds a strong sense of belonging and

community connectedness.

Liza Bouillion-Diaz, the 4-H assistant dean and director for the University of Illinois, said that it was a great privilege to learn more about the CNMI 4-H program.

"I could see clearly how the principles of youth voice and leadership are common across our programs—connecting us as a global 4-H family," Bouillion-Diaz said. "Workforce readiness, climate change, happiness, and well-being are goals we share in Illinois as well, and I took home many ideas from the innovative program examples shared by dean Patty and Ms. Tayna. I hope that this is the launch of



NMC

Northern Marianas College – Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Services interim dean Patty Coleman, left, and NMC-CREES Family, Community, and Youth Development State program leader Tayna Belyeu-Camacho, right, recently convened with members of the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy's National 4-H Leadership Committee in Kona, Hawaii. In photo with Coleman and Belyeu-Camacho is Jennifer Sirangelo, president and CEO of the National 4-H Council.

US, Japan unveil plans to strengthen their alliance

WASHINGTON (AP)—The United States and Japan unveiled plans last Wednesday to strengthen their alliance to help counter threats from North Korea and China, which they called the greatest security challenge in the region.

In unusually blunt terms, the U.S. and Japanese foreign and defense ministers condemned China's increasing aggressiveness in the Indo-Pacific and elsewhere, called out Russia for its war with Ukraine and castigated North Korea for ramping up its nuclear and missile programs.

In a joint statement, Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and their Japanese counterparts, Yoshimasa Hayashi and Yasukazu Hamada, said China presents an "unprecedented" threat to international order and vowed to redouble their efforts to counter it.

"China's foreign policy seeks to reshape the international order to its benefit and to employ China's growing political, economic, military, and technological power to that end," the statement said. "This behavior is of serious concern to the alliance and the entire international community, and represents the greatest strategic challenge in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond."

The four men agreed to adjust the American troop presence on the island of Okinawa in part to enhance anti-ship capabilities that would be needed in the event of a Chinese incursion into Taiwan or other hostile acts in the South or East China seas.

They also added a formal mention of outer space in the longstanding U.S.-Japan security treaty, making clear that "attacks to, from and within space" could trigger the mutual defense provisions of the treaty. That had previously been outside the scope of the agreement. In addition, the U.S.

space agency NASA plans to sign a cooperation deal with Japan on Friday, they said.

Prior to the meeting, Japan's defense ministry announced it was ready to start construction on an uninhabited island where the two militaries will hold joint military exercises beginning in 2027.

Blinken said the agreement signed Wednesday reflects the two nations' effort to deepen cooperation "across all realms," including space, cybersecurity and emerging technologies.

He said the U.S.-Japan alliance has "been the cornerstone of peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific, ensuring the security, the liberty and prosperity of our people and people across the region."

Wednesday's discussions will be followed by a meeting on Friday between President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at which they will underscore the importance of the relationship.

Kishida, on a weeklong trip to visit allies in Europe and North America, signed a defense agreement with British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Wednesday that strengthens military ties between their two countries, also in response to China.

Austin noted that Wednesday's agreement affirms America's "ironclad commitment to defend Japan with a full range of capabilities, including nuclear" and underscores that Article 5 of the mutual security treaty applies to the Senkaku Islands. The disputed islands outside Japanese territorial waters are also claimed by Beijing.

Earlier Wednesday, Japan said it would begin constructing a pair of runways on the small southern island of Mageshima where joint exercises, including those of F-35B stealth fighters, amphibious operations and mis-

sile interception, will start in roughly four years.

The island, off the southwestern coast of Kagoshima on the southernmost main island of Kyushu, will be a hub for troop deployment and munition supply in case of a conflict like a Taiwan emergency.

Japan and the United States are moving one of their key flight exercise sites to the southern island, which is much closer to the U.S. air base of Iwakuni, home to an F-35B fleet, than the current training site on Iwo Jima, where one of the bloodiest and most iconic battles of World War II was fought.

The changes in the U.S. deployment on Okinawa will transform the 12th Marine Regiment into a smaller, more rapidly mobile unit—the 12th Marine Littoral Regiment, which will be designed to be better equipped to fight an adversary and defend the U.S. and its allies in the region.

Austin said the regiment will bring "tremendous" capabilities to the region as a "more lethal, more agile, more capable" military unit.

U.S. officials said the decision will not increase the number of Marines on the island and does not come with any significant change in weapons capability.

Reinforcement of military capability or troops is a sensitive issue for Okinawa, site of one of the bloodiest ground battles at the end of World War II. The island hosts more than half of the U.S. troops based in Japan, and Okinawans want that number reduced.

A littoral regiment is made up of roughly 2,000 Marines, and includes a combat team with an anti-ship missile battery, a logistics battalion and an air defense battalion. The current Marine regiment on Okinawa that it would essentially replace includes about 3,400 Marines and sailors.

an ongoing partnership and exchange opportunity!"

Jennifer Sirangelo, president and CEO of the National 4-H Council, said that she was impressed with all the presentations.

"The NMC programs stood out for their authentic youth-led approach, their alignment with research-based youth

development principles, and their professional quality marketing and storytelling," Sirangelo said. "Most importantly, the fun leaped off the screen in the enthusiastic voices of the young people sharing their excitement about their 4-H program. It was clear that hundreds of young people have found their spark and

their safe place to belong and grow in the NMC 4-H program. I learned so much and look forward to strengthening the National 4-H Council's relationship with the NMC-CREES 4-H program into the future."

For more information about the 4-H Marianas program, visit crees.marianas.edu. (NMC)



NORTHERN MARIANAS TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

P.O. Box 504880 Saipan MP 96950
Tel. No.: (670) 235-6684

Board of Trustee Vacancy Announcement

JVA No.	This announcement is to fill the following vacancies for:
2023-001	Rota Representative For the remaining term set to expire March 11, 2024.
2023-002	Representative for Women For the remaining term set to expire March 11, 2026.
2023-003	Business Representative For the remaining term set to expire March 11, 2026.
2023-004	Business Representative For the remaining term set to expire March 11, 2027.

Qualifications for Board of Trustees:

Qualifications of a Board member consist of the following:

- A legal domiciliary of the CNMI and a U.S. Citizen.
- Of legal adult voting age within the CNMI. In this particular vacancy, the adult must be a registered voter at their respective islands; and
- A demonstrated capacity for representing the CNMI's career and technical training fields relative to meeting the overall purpose of NMTI.

No person may become a Trustee while a CNMI government or NMTI employee, or until one year after the conclusion of CNMI government or NMTI employment.

How to submit interest:

To submit interest to serve on the Northern Marianas Technical Institute Board of Trustees, kindly email a letter of interest and your resume to: bot@nmtechnmi.org

Due date:

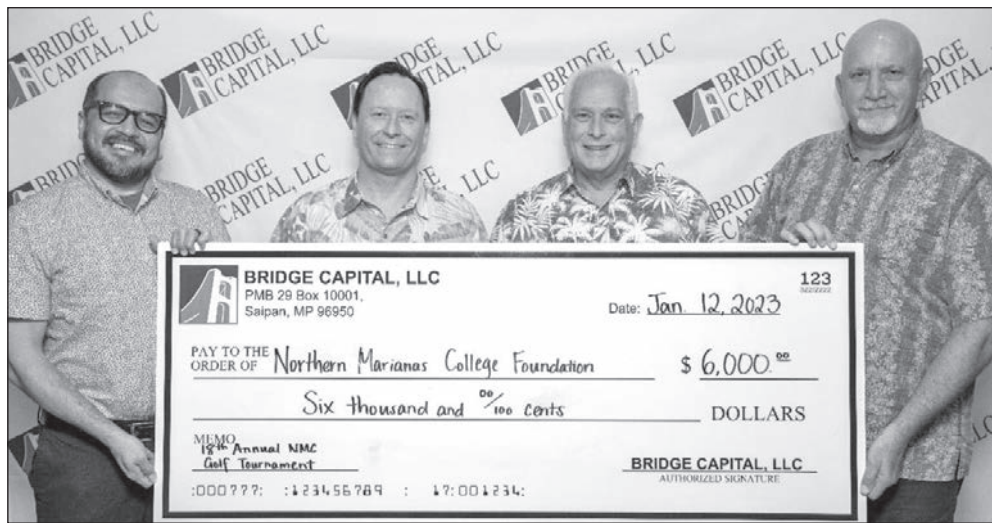
Closing Date: **February 07, 2023**

Bridge Capital donates \$6K in cash and prizes to NMC Foundation

As part of its efforts to support higher education and expanding opportunities for students, Bridge Capital recently donated \$6,000 in cash and prizes to Northern Marianas College. The company's donation was made in support of NMC Foundation's upcoming golf open in March 2023.

"Bridge Capital is proud to be a part of the effort that helps NMC provide quality higher education to the CNMI," Bridge Capital vice president Bart Jackson said. "We encourage other companies and organizations in the Commonwealth to do the same."

For the first time, NMC's tournament will be a two-day event and will be held on March 18 and 19, 2023, on the



east and west courses of the LaoLao Bay Golf and Resort. The tournament fee for the 2023 golf open is \$250.

"The success of NMC Foundation's golf tournaments is

largely due to the generosity and involvement of businesses like Bridge Capital," NMC Foundation Board chair Ben Babauta said. "We are greatly appreciative of their donation this year."

The tournament, which is the signature event of the NMC Foundation, aims to raise funds for the college for its rebuilding and reconstruction efforts. Despite the devastation and

Bridge Capital, LLC donates \$6,000 in cash and prizes to the Northern Marianas College Foundation in support of its upcoming Golf Open on March 18 and 19, 2023, at the LaoLao Bay Golf and Resort. In photo from left is NMC president Galvin Deleon Guerrero, Ed.D.; Bridge Capital vice chairman and director Shawn Scott; Bridge Capital CEO John Baldwin; and Bridge Capital vice president Bart Jackson.

destruction of Super Typhoon Soudelor and Yutu, the college has been aggressively seeking funds from all available sources to rebuild classrooms, offices, labs, and workforce spaces for the CNMI community. The foundation is seeking the CNMI private sector's support through

fundraising events like the golf tournament.

Interested companies and individuals who would like to help the college with its rebuilding efforts can donate educational tax credit, cash, or in-kind contributions by visiting www.marianas.edu/golf or by contacting NMC Foundation Coordinator Carla Sablan at carla.sablan@marianas.edu or (670) 237-6780.

Golfers who would like to register for the upcoming tournament can also visit www.marianas.edu/golf. Only online payments are accepted for this upcoming golf open.

For more updates, follow NMC on Facebook and Instagram ([nmc.proa](https://www.instagram.com/nmc.proa)) or visit www.marianas.edu. (PR)

DESPITE NOT GETTING BOOSTED

LTA to continue creation of Content Curation Center

The Latte Training Academy, Inc. did not get a BOOST grant, but the organization is steadfast in continuing toward the development of its Content Curation Center. As part of the organization's focus on expanding technology opportunities within the CNMI, the organization applied for the development of a Digital Content Curation Center. The proposal, if fully funded, would have created 10 positions across Saipan, Tinian and Rota focused on development of social media content and account management for clients across the US.

"Most people don't even know that the Latte Training Academy conceived and partnered with IntelliSecure, Inc. to

stand up the region's first Security Operations Center within the Cybersecurity space. We did this prior to the pandemic; however, during the pandemic, our effort created 25 full-time positions for local residents who are still employed to this day. We know that technology is a viable and clean option for the CNMI. As such, we applied to develop and start the region's first Digital Content Creation Center as part of the BOOST application. Despite the outcome, we are continuing to develop the effort and will launch in the second quarter of this year" said LTA board treasurer Kimberly Camacho.

The Digital Content Curation Center is focused on the

commercialization of content creation and account management in the digital marketing space. With thousands of small businesses, millions of high school, and amateur athletes as a target market, the Content Curation Center is focused on development and management of social media content across multiple platforms, mainly Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, and Snapchat. The Latte Training Academy, Inc. has already begun securing clients and is set to begin providing service once its workforce is prepared to begin.

"We were originally looking at hiring individual employees, but we shifted our strategy to subcontracting out the services to the local content creation community. To

ensure we are able meet the demand we anticipate, we are holding a variety of training courses this year, starting with our Information of Technology Fundamentals course this month," said Austin Hocog, LTA business lead.

"We have already demon-

strated that technology jobs are viable within the CNMI. We demonstrated that there is an interest in utilizing the CNMI's employment base to support tech firms. We know that digital marketing is widely used in commerce and we know that we have the talent

pool and opportunity within the CNMI to make this a reality" said LTA board president Juan-Carlos Benitez.

To learn more about the Latte Training Academy, their programs and business opportunities, visit www.lta-cnmi.org. (LTA)

4 from CNMI make it to SNHU President's List, Dean's List

MANCHESTER, NH—Two students from the CNMI were recently named to the Southern New Hampshire University's fall 2022 President's List, while two others were named to the university's Dean's List.

Elicia San Nicolas of Saipan and Raybrent Iglecias of Tinian made it to the university's fall 2022 President's List, which ran from September to December last year.

Separately, Alyssa Marie


Valdez and Sandy Asao, who are both from Saipan, were named to the fall 2022 Dean's List, which also ran from September to December.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring,

and summer.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term are named to the Dean's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

SNHU is a private, nonprofit institution. Learn more at www.snhu.edu. (PR)


CNMI DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
RFP NO.: RFP23-DOL/OSHA- 42300025

SUBMISSION DATE: February 10, 2023 TIME: 9:00 A.M.

"CNMI OSHA On-site Consultation Website"


COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED ON THE MUNIS VENDOR SELF SERVICE PORTAL (<https://selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/>) OR AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT HORIGUCHI BLDG, GROUND FLOOR, 123 KOPPA DI ORU & BEACH ROAD, GARAPAN, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/s/ VICKY BENAVENTE
SECRETARY OF LABOR

/s/ VIVIAN M. LIZAMA
ACTING DIRECTOR, P.S.


NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
 P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

NMHC hereby publicly discloses that on Tuesday, June 15, 2021, Vincent Palacios Sablan, an immediate family member of Congressman John Paul Palacios Sablan, applied for assistance under the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Housing Program.


Said applicant has been determined to be a member of a group or class of low-income persons intended to be beneficiaries of the assisted activity and is applying to receive generally the same benefits being made available to the group or class. Congressman John Paul Palacios Sablan is not and shall not be involved in the handling of this loan application.

NMHC discloses this possible conflict pursuant to 24 CFR 92.356 in order to allow any interested persons to comment before the application is considered for an exception under applicable conflict regulations.

Any comments should be submitted to NMHC on or before Wednesday, January 25, 2023. Written comments may be faxed to Fax No.: (670) 234-9451, mailed to P.O. Box 500514 Saipan, MP 96950, or emailed to cnmi-cdbg-dr@nmhcgov.net.

Dated this 10th of January, 2023.

/s/
JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director


Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS LICENSING BOARD
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 Email: cnmibpl-hcplb.net
 Website: cnmibpl-hcplb.net

Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Governor David M. Apatang, through the Health Care Professions Licensing Board (HCPLB) hereby give notice that it will hold its regular monthly board meeting on **Wednesday, January 18, 2023, at 8 a.m.** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at BPL-HCPLB Conference Room, Building #1242, Pohnpei Court, Capitol Hill, Saipan.

AGENDA

- I. Meeting Call to Order
- II. Determination of Quorum
- III. Review and Adoption of Agenda
- IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes (10/26/22 and 12/14/2022)
- V. Public Comments
- VI. Chairperson's Report
 - Courtesy Resignations
- VII. Director's Report
 - Notification for Adoption on the Proposed Amendments for Psychology & Physicians (effective Jan 09, 2023).
 - Energov Update
- VIII. Investigator's Report
- IX. Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
 - A. Governor's Office
 - B. Legislature
- X. Old Business
- XI. New Business
 - Election of Officers for 2023-2024
- XII. Pending Applications for Board's Review
 - A. New Application
 - B. Renewal Application
- XIII. Miscellaneous Business
 - A. 2023 Annual National Councils Meeting Schedule
- XIV. Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
 - A. Request for an Oversight on a Dental Clinic Providing Substandard Services
- XV. Announcements
 - A. Next Meeting Date
 - B. Adjournment of Meeting

WITH ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PROJECTS

3 Saipan elementary schools beautify their campuses

Last December, elementary school students and advisers invested 150 hours to improve the appearance of three campuses on Saipan, according to the Governor's Council of Economic Advisers.

Among the activities supported by the GCEA's Marianas School Pride campaign were a campus restroom beautification, installation of a vegetable garden, and a tree-planting initiative.

The following schools completed beautification activities in December 2022:

■ Garapan Elementary School: Campus Restroom Beautification

■ Koblerville Elementary School: Campus Vegetable Garden Installation

■ Oleai Elementary School: Campus Tree-planting Initiative

Garapan Elementary School

Garapan Elementary School's MSP Ambassadors invested more than 130 hours to complete their first MSP Campus Beautification Project. According to MSP Adviser Regina De Vero, the motivation behind the restroom beautification was to spread more positivity around the campus to students.

"We recently faced a few situations that started initially in the restroom, so we thought putting some motivational posters and reminders to students would make them want to be more responsible and caring toward their campus," said De Vero.

According to De Vero, students will be able to change the posters to align with the schools' themes or Education Month logo.

De Vero thanked the students for participating in these projects and "continuing to



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Garapan Elementary School's MSP Ambassadors invested more than 130 hours to complete their first MSP Campus Beautification Project, a campus restroom beautification that aims to spread positivity.

encourage yourself, as well as each other, to help beautify our campus. We are proud to see the hard work you have put into this and the time you dedicate to joining us."

De Vero wants other students to be proud of their projects and present them to their families and friends to encourage them to be involved on campus as well. For the school's next project, GES hopes to work on repainting the school initials on the water tank and repairing the flower bed in front of the office.

As for MSP Ambassadors Tomika Shaha and MD Rahad Hossain, both hope that other students will volunteer to make the campus more enjoyable.

"It's important so the future generation of students can have a better environment and also continue to want to beautify the school campus. Taking care of our environment can help prevent pollution and also prevent spreading sickness to humans and animals," said Shaha.

Hossain added, "It's fun to

do activities with other students and meet new friends. You can also be helping the school campus and the community. You can learn new things and find new hobbies that you like doing with all the activities we do."

Koblerville Elementary School

Koblerville Elementary School's MSP Ambassadors put in seven hours to complete their first MSP Campus Beautification Project. According to MSP Adviser Francis Mendiola, the motivation behind the installation of a vegetable garden was to teach the students ways to be self-sufficient and to enjoy being in nature doing hands-on activities.

Students were able to plant four types of hot peppers—pumpkin, salsa, tabasco, and cayenne—followed by okra, cucumber, eggplant, string beans, calamansi, local lemon, and pomegranate.

"We hope this garden brings a sense of ownership and appreciation for what can come when hard work is put into ac-

tion. We hope they appreciate the fruits of their labor," said Mendiola.

Mendiola says the garden belongs to the school and with the labor of love put into it, the students will be rewarded back in the end through the knowledge gained from their experiences growing the garden. She added that the experience will teach the students lifelong lessons.

According to KES STU- CO president and MSP Ambassador Napu Pangelinan, the garden will help raise funds to purchase equipment for the school.

"We can grow things to eat healthier. We could also sell our produce to the staff of the school in order to raise funds to purchase needed equipment to promote healthier lifestyles and activities, such as PE or playground equipment," said Pangelinan.

As for fifth grade Gardening Club member and MSP Ambassador Merleen Tamerang, the garden brings an aesthetic

appeal to the school.

"It encourages other students to want to participate as they see the farm developing and action being taken place," Tamerang said.

Oleai Elementary School

Oleai Elementary School's Marianas Youth Welcoming All Visitors Enthusiastically Club, in collaboration with the OES MSP members, planted trees along the OES southern field. According to OES MSP Adviser Orphea Singeo, both clubs wanted trees that flowered and were able to be kept at certain heights and shapes.

"[Students wanted] trees that bloomed flowers [as a] way to provide real-life examples and connections to classes learning about plant life. Trees that were easily maintained were chosen based on safety factors," said Singeo.

Of the trees that were planted, students were able to get their hands on plumeria trees from the Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance.

According to Singeo, the students chose this project as a means to stress the importance of trees and plant life in the Marianas' environment.

"We wanted the students' biggest takeaways to be that plants and trees provide oxygen, limit carbons, reduce air pollution, minimize erosion, provide food and homes for animals, and add beauty to the landscape. In essence, trees play a vital role in our environments," said Singeo.

MSP Adviser Isabel Maximina Carreon hopes that her peers will learn that trees play a big role in the Marianas' ecosystem.

"Trees will benefit our schools by making our cam-

pus look beautiful and provide shade for students during recess and P.E. I hoped my peers learned that trees provide homes to a variety of animals and insects that are important to our environment," said Carreon.

Carreon hopes other students will participate in future events to learn more about how to take care of their surroundings.

Carreon noted, "Years later, when you are older, you can come back and look at how much the trees have grown and appreciate your part in all of it."

About the MSP Campaign

Through these beautification initiatives, students learn the value of taking pride in their campuses and making them better places to learn and thrive. The campaign's goal is to help students understand their essential role in making their schools better places to learn and make friends. Through their experiences, students can be instrumental in educating others in the community about the importance of a clean environment and hopefully mimic these activities in their homes and villages.

The GCEA commends the students and advisers on their successful projects and encourages other schools to be creative in how their efforts can improve the quality of their campus experiences. Together, We Can!

For more information or to participate in the Marianas School Pride, visit the GCEA website at cnmieconomy.com or contact the Council at gceacnmi@gmail.com. (GCEA)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Eighteen Koblerville Elementary School students completed their first Marianas School Pride Campus Beautification Project on December 22, 2022. The project aims to encourage students to be self-sufficient and enjoy being out in nature doing hands-on activities.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Oleai Elementary School's Marianas Youth Welcoming All Visitors Enthusiastically Club in collaboration with the OES MSP members planted trees along the OES southern field as part of the Marianas School Pride Campaign.

Opinion

Hafa Adair

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

By George: Even top Republicans now say Santos, the fraud, must go

Mark Twain is right that a lie travels around the world before the truth can put its pants on, but the truth has raced back to bite George Santos in the rear. That became clearer than ever Wednesday as leading New York Republicans demanded the new congressman resign immediately. Among them were state Republican Chair Nick Langworthy, Nassau County Chair Joseph Cairo, former Sen. Al D'Amato and Rep. Anthony Esposito. It is damning indeed when the party of Donald Trump in Trump's native state considers a politician's fabrications disqualifying.

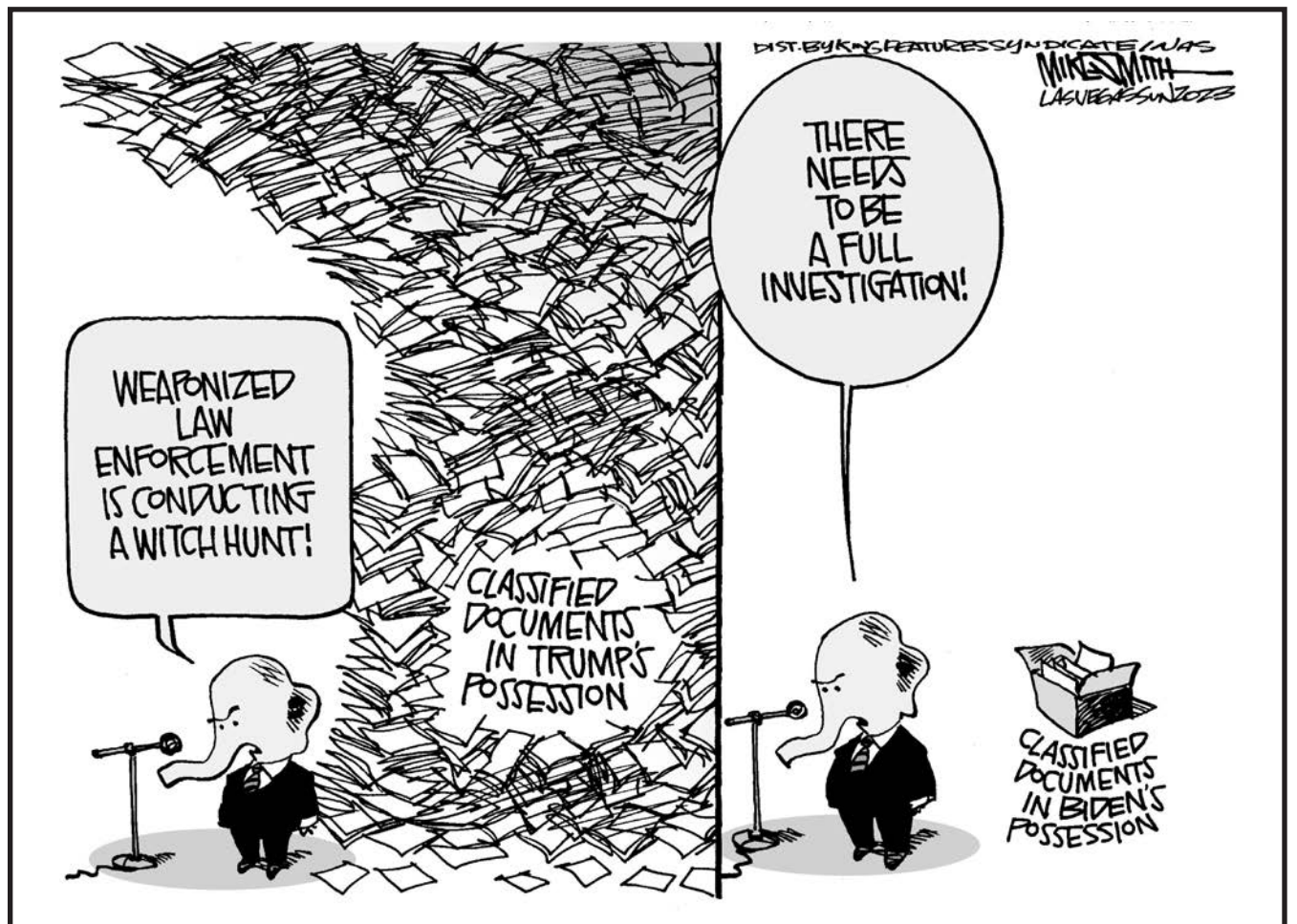
Santos is defiant, refusing to step down because he was "elected to serve the people of #NY03 and not the party & politicians."

But the man the voters elected bears little resemblance to the disgraced and diminished figure who now puts on a brave face. He lied about where he went to high school and where he went to college. He lied about getting a degree. He lied about working for Goldman Sachs and Citigroup. He lied about founding an animal charity. There's no record of the portfolio of buildings he claims to have owned. He falsely said that the 9/11 attacks "claimed my mother's life." He called himself the "grandson of Holocaust refugees" and a "proud American Jew"; those assertions don't check out either. He has been shifty on where hundreds of thousands of dollars he lent his own campaign came from. He said he lost "four employees" in the 2016 Pulse nightclub shooting, but that too turns out to be untrue.

Santos dismisses these volumes of fiction as mere "embellishment," akin to common resume puffery, but making a small fraction of such blatant misrepresentations to a prospective employer during the hiring process would get any ordinary employee fired lickety-split.

New Yorkers elected a man named George Santos who does not exist. The one who now wields power in their name in Congress should look himself in the cracked mirror and have the decency to heed the rising calls for his resignation.

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Facial recognition will transform airport security checkpoints

Imagine using technology that never forgets a face, while improving airport security and shortening lines. Such technology exists and may be coming to an airport near you.

Every flyer over the past two decades knows that airport security procedures involve a lot of unpacking, screening and repacking. This is the price that must be paid for using commercial air travel.

Yet, it does not need to be this way, and the Transportation Security Administration has the right idea in testing and deploying biometrics such as facial identification technology at airport security checkpoints.

Although travelers believe that the most important task undertaken by the TSA is detecting threat items, the true role of airport security screening is ensuring that you are the person you claim to be.

The TSA has been working on moving more passengers from "unknown" to "known" status for more than a decade. The first effort in this regard was the introduction of TSA PreCheck in 2011, which gives travelers the privilege (for a fee) of accessing expedited screening lanes. This means that your shoes can stay on, your computers and electronics can stay in your carry-on bag, and light outerwear can remain in place.

The launch of facial identification technology enhances such efforts and has the potential to revolutionize the way that airport security checkpoints are designed and operated.

Facial identification technology ensures that you are who you claim to be. When presenting yourself at a checkpoint, your face becomes your entry pass, based on a repository of pictures that you have voluntarily provided in the past. These pictures are assembled from passports or visas.

Another technology the TSA has deployed to enhance identity verification is Credential Authentication Technology. This, in concert with REAL IDs, which regrettably have been delayed until 2025, as a requirement for air travel, provide a more robust process for identity verification.

Facial identification technology takes this process to an even higher level of robustness. It is now being tested on a limited scale at 16 airports. Passengers are being given the opportunity to participate by opting in at these locations.

After more than two decades in a post-9/11 world, most travelers believe that airport screening is about stopping threat items from getting onto planes. In reality, the focus on detection is a surrogate for stopping bad people from inflicting harm to the air system. By elevating identity validation, the need for threat item detection is reduced.

By **SHELDON H. JACOBSON**

Chicago Tribune

Sheldon H. Jacobson is a professor of computer science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He employs his expertise in data-driven, risk-based decision-making to evaluate and inform public policy. He has studied aviation security for more than 25 years.



Once a person's identity is confirmed using facial identification technology, they may be subjected to expedited screening, much like those who have been vetted by TSA PreCheck. As more people opt in to the facial identification program, the aggregate air system risk is reduced.

The biggest criticism of facial recognition technology is the perceived invasion of privacy and the security of photos taken at checkpoints. Yet the photos being used to match your identity, like when applying for a passport or participating in the Global Entry program, are those that have already been shared with Customs and Border Protection. New photos taken at airport security checkpoints do nothing more than supplement what has been freely provided.

As for the security of such photo data, the cyberworld has been and continues to be the Wild West for criminals. Much of what we do on our phones may be more vulnerable to intrusion than the photos stored by the Department of Homeland Security.

The long game for facial identification technology is screening in real time. This means that most travelers can pass through checkpoints without stopping, with none of their personal items requiring screening.

This futuristic vision for airport security is a far cry from the physical screening-centered approach travelers endure today. Facial identification technology is a driver to make this future a reality. Such changes will not happen overnight. It will take many years before facial identification technology is sufficiently robust to effect such massive changes.

However, the technology is a game changer. It adds a layer of security that will revolutionize airport screening. Once implemented and perfected, it will create a pathway for an airport screening experience that will be eventually embraced as the new model for airport security.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

An old-school English teacher encounters ChatGPT

Several weeks ago the artificial intelligence company OpenAI released ChatGPT, a language model software that aspires to the Holy Grail of interaction between humans and their computers: the ability to have a “conversation.”

Henceforth I’ll stop putting quotation marks around words like conversation and think and remember. These are things that humans do, and we should keep in mind that we’re still talking about a machine. Nevertheless, for this column I’ll dispense with the judgment implied by quotation marks around a word such as “learn” when it’s applied to a computer. If you experiment a bit with ChatGPT you might see why.

Because this software has been trained—by human trainers—to recognize the probabilistic connections between words as humans use them. I’m not sure what that means, but the result is that ChatGPT appears to engage in conversations not unlike those between people.

I approached ChatGPT with skepticism born of more than three decades of teaching writing skills to college freshmen. I’m from a generation for whom artificial intelligence is the stuff of science fiction and to whom writing is a semi-mysterious skill or art reserved for human beings.

Still, I tried to retain an open mind. I started by asking ChatGPT to perform a task familiar to many students:

“Write a college admissions essay about my time in the Peace Corps in Bolivia.”

In 30 seconds ChatGPT produced an organized, credible, grammatically correct essay about my imaginary work as a community health volunteer in a rural village in Bolivia. I conducted health workshops, helped establish a clean water

system and worked with local clinics to improve access to health care.

It was a “truly enriching experience” that “prepared me for a career in public service.” I was “excited to bring my skills and experiences to (University Name) and to contribute to the university community.”

I had good experiences elsewhere, as well. I was “welcomed with open arms” by the needy citizens of Costa Rica, Ghana, Jordan and Mexico. I helped build schools, taught English, coached children in computer skills and organized physical-education classes.

But all of this sounded too good to be true. I asked ChatGPT to include some information about negative experiences in the Peace Corps.

ChatGPT seemed to understand the need for honesty and transparency, but it wisely pointed out that in an admissions essay it’s important to cast my experiences in a “positive light.” I could mention—or ChatGPT could do it for me—a negative experience such as suffering from homesickness or having problems adjusting to a new environment. The admissions committee, ChatGPT said, will be interested in how I overcame it.

This is reasonable advice, but my skepticism persisted. When I asked ChatGPT to write an essay about my service in the Peace Corps in North Korea, it seemed to know I was messing with it. The Peace Corps does not have a program in North Korea, it sniffed, and thus it would be impossible for me to have served there.

Furthermore, “It is important to be honest and accurate in your admissions essay, and it is not appropriate to fabricate

By JOHN M. CRISP

Tribune News Service

John M. Crisp, an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service, lives in Texas and can be reached at jcrispcolumns@gmail.com.



and exaggerate your experiences.”

Busted. Duly chastised, I began to give ChatGPT a little more respect.

In fact, I asked: “Write a 675-word newspaper op-ed on how ChatGPT could be used to teach college writing.” In 30 seconds, ChatGPT did that very thing.

But not the op-ed you’re reading here. ChatGPT’s prose is clunky, bland and formulaic. It sounds as if it were written by a machine. It’s annoyingly equivocal, filled with phrases such as “On one hand,” “On the other,” “In general” and “Some would say.”

Most of all, ChatGPT’s prose is ... soulless. It doesn’t have that ineffable sense of voice or will or agency that only a real human being can render in prose. At least so far.

One thing is clear: For good or ill, something monumental happened to writing instruction in December of 2022; it’s unlikely to ever be the same.

But can college students use ChatGPT to cheat in college writing classes? Just ask it.

Crime, immigration and the peaceful transfer of power

Turn to right-wing media outlets and one narrative you’ll hear is about a “crime wave,” especially in progressive cities and the need for an authoritarian to provide safety. At least, that’s what I hear, with chagrin. Dig into the statistics, and there’s another story that emerges about the data itself, from which these “news” reports are derived.

First and foremost, national statistics for 2022 are not yet available. The latest data available is for 2021 and when reporting on crime rates, most media compare statistics from 2020 to previous years. In other words, the data is not current. And in 2020, as has been reported, there was a significant increase in violent crime, especially murder. Crime statistics for 2021 and 2022 are not yet fully available. This is due to a change in how we collect the data. For years, we’ve heard about the inconsistent (and voluntary) submission of crime data by law enforcement agencies to the FBI for national analysis. The Department of Justice has worked to solve this dilemma by creating a new database, which began collecting data in 2021. Even so, in 2021, only 11,794 of 18,806 law enforcement agencies complied by reporting data. As an example, Los Angeles and New York City have not reported 2021 data as of October 2022.

So what is the truth? It’s complicated. Several news reports focus on big cities, others on medium size cities. One report contains a city by city breakdown from January-June of 2022 compared with 2021. It was the most current data I could find. This preliminary counting (as reported to the new national database) shows an overall decrease in murders and sexual assault, but an increase in robbery and aggravated assault. You can see for yourself, each city has its own ups and downs.

Between 2010 and 2020, violent crime rates peaked in 2010 at 405 offenses per 100,000 people. In 2014, it dipped to 362. By 2020, it had risen to 398. Within that 10 year period, 405 to 398 is statistically insignificant at approximately 1%. Regardless of what the data is, we often prefer to play the blame game, or counter the blame game. We would be better served by addressing the issue on the merits.

Immigration

Immigration has been a hotly debated topic for over two centuries. As a young nation, citizens often espoused the “keep them out” mantra due to economic or racial fears. And politicians have used these fears to whip up support by promising to protect their voters from “those people.” While African Americans were already in the nation, waves of people looking for opportunity came to the U.S. from 1820-1924 without a formal immigration process. People arrived from Ireland, Germany, China, Italy, Eastern Europe and Russia (including Jews), Mexico and beyond. The Chinese exclusion act of 1880 prohibited anyone of Asian descent for 10 years from entering our shores. This was a xenophobic closed door policy, not an immigration policy. In 1924, our first immigration policy was enacted; a quota system to slow down (or stop) the arrival of new immigrants. It was a bad policy then, and the subsequent evolution of laws has never slowed immigration or treated immigrants equally, regardless of country of origin.

The last immigration legislation was passed during the Reagan administration in 1986. Three subsequent enforcement laws (1996, 2002, 2006) added staff, surveillance equipment and fencing to combat illegal immigration, but did not change the how and who of immigration policy. Two subsequent presidents have issued two Executive Orders each (DACA and DAPA), with Trump’s orders canceling Obama’s.

In other words, we keep putting Band-Aids on an obviously broken system with no systemic solutions in sight. Every day, thousands of people want to come to the United States and that will continue. How do we decide who to let in and who to exclude? Asylum-seekers and refugees are different from other immigrants in our policy solutions. There is a mix of skilled and unskilled workers; those with family residing in the U.S. and those who want their family to follow them. Unfortunately, as so often happens in politics many people are pointing fingers with few willing to tackle the underlying causes.

This political hot potato, like crime statistics, becomes another tool of heated rhetoric. Lots of hot air. No commitments.

By DEBILYN MOLINEAUX

The Fulcrum

Debilyn Molineaux is co-publisher of The Fulcrum and president/CEO of the Bridge Alliance Education Fund.



And who benefits? Not us, the people of the United States.






Peaceful transfer of power

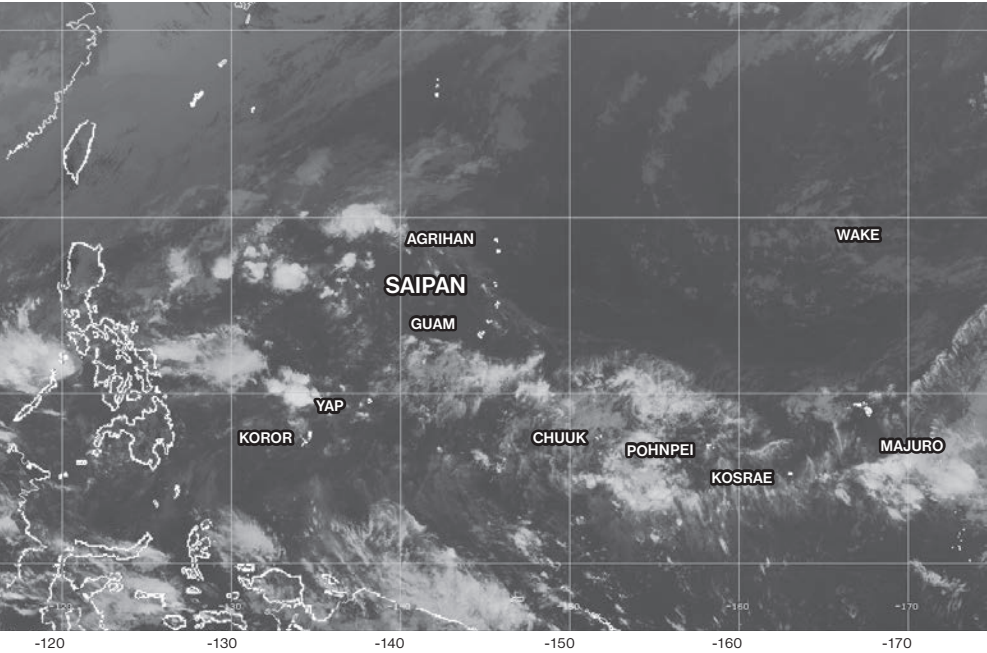
All of this was on my mind as I watched the 15 rounds of nominations for speaker of the House. It was a good exercise for the American people to witness. It was a demonstration of the peaceful transfer of power and using the constitutional process we have to reach an agreement in a nonviolent way. The rhetoric of the six GOP holdouts (and some of the Dems, too!) was pure propaganda and blame-casting for issues that remain unresolved after decades. Their use of the power they held was annoying to many, but it was also masterful. And now a minority of six members of Congress have dictated the rules of the House for the other 429 members.

The moderates of both parties missed an opportunity to form a powerful coalition. I fully understand the political risks that both the Democrats and Republicans will face in opposing the party leadership and choosing to work together. For those of us who believe in finding common ground it is imperative that we thwart the power of the extremes on both sides. The extremes have made cooperation or compromise with the other party an act of political suicide. No one seems to have the courage to act on what is obvious to the exhausted majority: Congress is dysfunctional and we need to work together to fix it.

It is time for real leaders to step forward and to put our country before their party loyalty. We call on the moderates of both parties to have courage and trust in those who elected them. We, the exhausted majority, want solutions.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
									
Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny	
85°	75°	85°	75°	85°	75°	84°	75°	84°	75°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 8:38 AM, MONDAY, JANUARY 16, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Guam Doppler weather radar shows isolated showers moving through the Marianas Waters with scattered showers south of the Guam Waters. The scattered showers are associated with a decaying shear line which is moving off to the west along with the high pressure system producing it.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲▼°F
Guam and Rota	Isolated Thunderstorms	85° / 76°	
Palau	Partly Cloudy	85° / 78°	
Yap	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°	
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	86° / 80°	
Pohnpei	Isolated Thunderstorms	84° / 78°	
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	87° / 78°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:46 AM	6:06 PM
Wednesday	6:46 AM	6:07 PM
Thursday	6:46 AM	6:08 PM
Friday	6:46 AM	6:08 PM
Saturday	6:47 AM	6:09 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	1:43 AM	1:26 PM	-
Wednesday	2:42 AM	2:15 PM	-
Thursday	3:46 AM	3:13 PM	-
Friday	4:53 AM	4:17 PM	-
Saturday	6:00 AM	5:26 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼°F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	72° / 61°	
Beijing	Mostly Cloudy	30° / 18°	
Hong Kong	Cloudy	64° / 56°	
Honolulu	Showers	81° / 71°	
London	Showers	39° / 34°	
Los Angeles	Sunny	82° / 51°	
Manila	Partly Cloudy	88° / 75°	
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	82° / 59°	
Miami	Sunny	70° / 55°	
New York	Mostly Sunny	44° / 35°	
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	48° / 39°	
Paris	Showers	43° / 34°	
Busan	Mostly Sunny	50° / 43°	
Rome	Rain	59° / 50°	
Salem	Sunny	56° / 38°	
San Francisco	Sunny	64° / 46°	
Seoul	Sunny	27° / 14°	
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	46° / 34°	
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	46° / 34°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
4:25 AM	High Tide	1.24	
8:50 AM	Low Tide	0.97	
2:36 PM	High Tide	1.65	
10:20 PM	Low Tide	-0.21	

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 17, 2023							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:46AM	Daily
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5	UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:30AM	7:25AM	Daily	PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA193	7:55PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau	UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA183	8:00PM	9:50PM	Daily	UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
				UA189	12:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam	UA189/174	12:40AM	8:46AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	UA184/174	10:55PM	8:46AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via Guam
OZ624/701	3:50PM	10:35AM+1	3,6 via Incheon	UA192/174	10:40PM	8:46AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
				OZ704/623	11:50PM	2:20PM+1	2, 5 via Incheon
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	3:15AM	6:55AM	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7	OZ623	9:00AM	2:20PM	3, 6
TW9308	3:30AM	7:10AM	2, 4	7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
OZ624	3:50PM	7:40PM	3, 6	TW307	8:45PM	2:15AM+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily	TW9307	9:00PM	2:30AM+1	1, 5
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)							

MARIANAS SOUTHERN AIRWAYS						
INITIAL DAILY FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF AUGUST 18, 2022						
SAIPAN TO TINIAN			TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	
7:00 A.M.	7:15 A.M.	(Except Sundays)	7:35 A.M.	7:50 A.M.	(Except Sundays)	
9:50 A.M.	10:05 A.M.		10:25 A.M.	10:40 A.M.		
4:00 P.M.	4:15 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)	4:35 P.M.	4:50 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)	
SAIPAN TO ROTA			ROTA TO SAIPAN			
DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	
8:10 A.M.	8:40 A.M.		9:00 A.M.	9:30 A.M.		
1:45 P.M.	2:15 P.M.		2:35 P.M.	3:05 P.M.		
SAIPAN TO GUAM			GUAM TO SAIPAN			
DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	
11:10 A.M.	12:00 P.M.		12:30 P.M.	1:20 P.M.		
5:15 P.M.	6:05 P.M.		6:40 P.M.	7:30 P.M.		

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

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Business

Tiana's Cafe: Rota's breakfast destination

By MARK RABAGO

mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Tiana's Cafe makes guests at Valentino Hotel on Rota right at home with their delectable breakfast menu and friendly staff.

Off-island guests of the hotel and locals alike frequent the Rota landmark for its famous early riser menu. It consists of American breakfast like pancakes, french toast, and all sorts of omelets like ham and cheese, bacon, portuguese, spam, and vegetable.

For those pining for a more hearty meal to start the day, Tiana's also has Filipino breakfast with tapsilog, tosilog, and longsilog among the surefire hits.

Another customer favorite is Tiana's honey bread with honey and caramel syrup with whip cream on top.

But Tiana's bestseller is its rice soba omelet, which is yakisoba noodles with fried rice topped with tonkatsu sauce and mayonnaise.

Staff Susan E. Elaigos said Tiana's is also slowly gaining a foothold on Rota's lunch crowd with dishes like curry, its assortment of sandwiches, chicken adobo, pork and chicken cutlets, pancit, yakisoba, Japanese ramen, spaghetti, pork ginger set, hamburger set, and fried fish or shrimp.

Their drinks are also nothing to scoff at as Tiana's serves various flavors of hot and iced coffee and smoothies.



From left, Tiana's Cafe staff Myrna Balinguit, Allan Perez, Jocelyn Encina, and Susan E. Elaigos.



Tiana's Cafe's bestseller rice soba omelet, which is yakisoba noodles with fried rice topped with tonkatsu sauce and mayonnaise.

Tiana's will forever be grateful to operate inside the Valentino Hotel as more often than not their guests also be-

came dine-in customers of the coffee shop.

"Eventually they become our regular customers whenever

they vacation in the beautiful island of Rota," said Elaigos.

Tiana's actually opened in 2006 under the auspices of the

hotel's former owners Diego and Antonia Songao. In fact, it is named after their granddaughter, Tiana.

It originally served only types of Danish and coffee until Mrs. Songao was persuaded by guests to open a full-fledged coffee shop.

As Tiana's expanded so did their menu as aside from Danish they added different kinds of bread like chicken and apple turnovers and cream cheese and blueberry cream cheese bread expertly prepared by their baker, who used to work at a cruise ship.

The coffee shop indeed became Rota's go-to place for

tasty bread offerings not only for locals, but also for off-island guests with some of them actually bringing Tiana's Danish back home to Guam and the U.S. mainland.

In 2018, Tiana's, along with Valentino Hotel, was acquired by TanHoldings Corp. and kick-started major renovations for both businesses.

Tiana's comfortably seats more than 50 customers—32 at its inside cafe and 20 at its el fresco dining. It is open everyday from 6am to 2pm with the last call at 1:30pm. For more information or for reservations, call Valentino Hotel at (670) 532-8466/67.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tiana's Cafe comfortably seats more than 50 customers—32 at its inside cafe and 20 at its el fresco dining.

Business trusted most in a more polarized world, report says

LONDON (AP)—People worldwide are more gloomy about their economic prospects than ever before and trust business far more than other institutions like governments, nonprofits and the media in an increasingly divided world, according to a survey from public relations firm Edelman.

Released late Sunday to coincide with the World Economic Forum's gathering of business elites and government leaders this week in Davos, Switzerland, the online survey conducted in 28 countries shows that fewer people believe their family will be better off in five years.

Those who believe they'll be better off dropped to 40% from 50% last year and hit all-time lows in 24 nations. That is because 89% fear losing their job, 74% worry about inflation, 76% are concerned about climate change and 72% worry about nuclear war.

The Edelman Trust Barometer also says 62% of respondents see business as both competent and ethical, compared with 59% for nongovernmental agencies, 51% for governments and 50% for the media. That was attributed to how companies treated workers during the COVID-19 pandemic and return to offices as well as many businesses vowing to exit Russia after it invaded Ukraine.

People still said they distrust CEOs as well as government leaders and journalists, while trusting their own corporate executives, co-workers and neighbors. Scientists were trusted the most—by 76% of respondents.

"The increased level of trust in business brings with it higher-than-ever expectations of CEOs to be a leading voice on societal issues," said Richard Edelman, CEO of Edelman. "By a six-to-one margin, respondents want more societal involvement by business on

issues such as climate change, economic inequality and workforce reskilling."

But companies face stirring contention by jumping into those topics, with 52% saying businesses can't avoid politicization when they tackle divisive social issues, he said.

Despite the uncertainty, people want companies to stand up for them: 63% say they buy or advocate for brands based on their beliefs and values.

Most respondents say business should do more, not less, to deal with climate change, economic inequality and other issues.

This comes as social divisions have become entrenched, creating a polarized world that has left people feeling like they can't overcome their differences or even willing to help others who don't share their beliefs, the survey says.

Less than one-third of respondents said they would

help, live with or work with someone who strongly disagrees with their viewpoints. Six countries—Argentina, Colombia, the U.S., South Africa, Spain and Sweden—were listed as severely polarized, driven by distrust in government and a lack of shared identity.

If divisions are not addressed, people fear the result will be worsening prejudice and discrimination, slower economic development and violence in the streets, the report said.

More than 40% in the survey believe governments and companies must work together to solve social issues, with the onus on the most-trusted institution—business—to bring people together.

Most respondents—64%—said companies supporting politicians and media outlets that build consensus would help increase civility and strengthen society.

Puerto Rico to privatize power generation amid outages

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)—Puerto Rico announced Sunday that it plans to privatize electricity generation, a first for a U.S. territory facing chronic power outages as it struggles to rebuild a crumbling electric grid.

The move marks the beginning of the end for Puerto Rico's Electric Power Authority, a behemoth long accused of corruption, mismanagement and inefficiency that holds some \$9 billion in public debt—the largest of any government agency.

Many Puerto Ricans already irate and fatigued by power outages were wary of the announcement, given that serious complaints about the length of outages, costly power bills and other issues arose after the island's government privatized the transmission and distribution of power in June 2021.

Fermín Fontanés, executive director of Puerto Rico's Public-Private Partnerships Authority, said the board of directors unanimously approved

the privatization of generation, including the members who represent the public's interest.

It was not immediately known which company they selected to take over power generation. A spokeswoman with the authority said the contract was not yet public, in accordance with local laws.

Fontanés said the contract would be sent to the governing board of Puerto Rico's power company and then to the territory's governor for his signature. The contract is expected to be approved despite opposition to the privatization.

Carmen Maldonado, vice president of the main opposition Popular Democratic Party, said she and others would fight the plan.

José Luis Dalmau, a party member and president of Puerto Rico's Senate, said lawmakers would scrutinize the process and demand that workers at the state power company be protected and that the grid is stabilized and number of outages reduced, among other things.

Nation

Biden: Americans should ‘pay attention’ to MLK’s legacy

ATLANTA (AP)—President Joe Biden made a historical pilgrimage Sunday to “America’s freedom church” to mark Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday, saying democracy was at a perilous moment and that the civil rights leader’s life and legacy “show us the way and we should pay attention.”

As the first sitting president to deliver a Sunday morning sermon at King’s Ebenezer Baptist Church, Biden cited the telling question that King himself once asked of the nation.

“He said, ‘Where do we go from here?’” Biden said from the pulpit. “Well, my message to this nation on this day is we go forward, we go together, when we choose democracy over autocracy, a beloved community over chaos, when we choose believers and the dreams, to be doers, to be unafraid, always keeping the faith.”

In a divided country only two years removed from a violent insurrection, Biden told congregants, elected officials and dignitaries that “the battle for the soul of this nation is perennial. It’s a constant struggle ... between hope and fear, kindness and cruelty, justice and injustice.”

He spoke out against those who “traffic in racism, extremism, insurrection” and said the struggle to safeguard

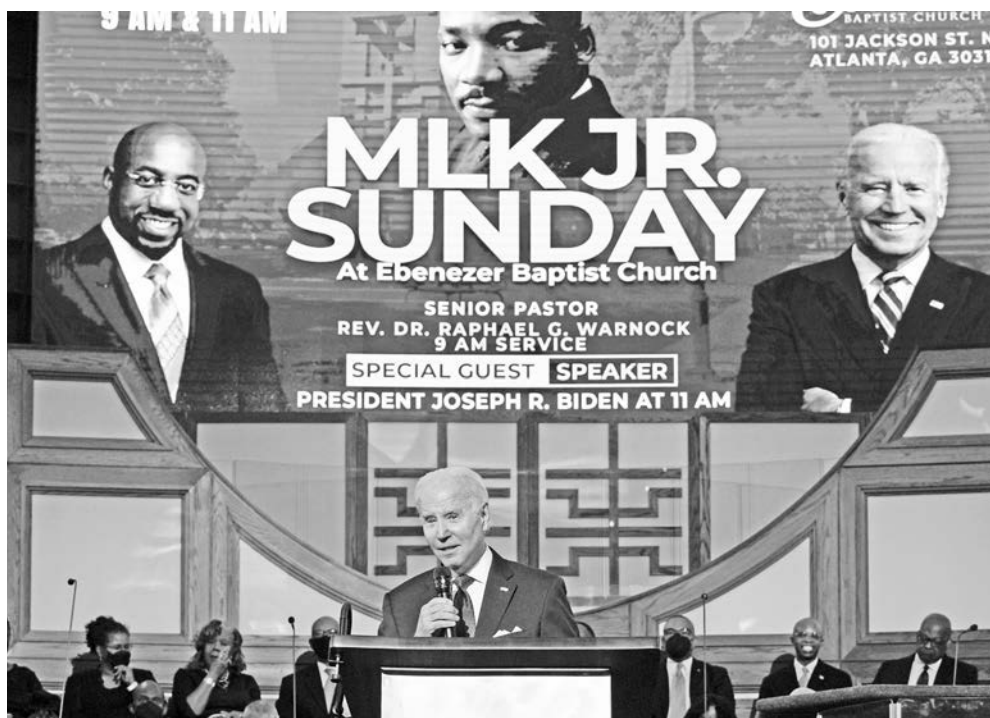
democracy was playing out in courthouses and ballot boxes, protests and other ways. “At our best, the American promise wins out. ... But I don’t need to tell you that we’re not always at our best. We’re fallible. We fail and fall.”

The stop at Ebenezer came at a delicate moment for Biden after Attorney General Merrick Garland on Thursday announced the appointment of a special counsel to investigate how the president handled classified documents after leaving the vice presidency in 2017. The White House on Saturday revealed that additional classified records were found at Biden’s home near Wilmington, Delaware.

In introducing Biden, the church’s senior pastor, Democratic Sen. Raphael Warnock noted that the president was “a devout Catholic” for whom “this Baptist service might be a little bit rambunctious and animated. But I saw him over there clapping his hands.”

King, “the greatest American prophet of the 20th century,” as Warnock put it, served as co-pastor from 1960 until he was assassinated in 1968.

Warnock, like many battleground state Democrats who won reelection in 2022, kept his distance during the campaign from Biden as the president’s approval rating lagged and the inflation rate climbed.



President Joe Biden speaks at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Sunday, Jan. 15, 2023, during a service honoring Martin Luther King Jr.

But with the election behind him and a full six-year term ahead, Warnock fully embraced Biden at the service. Near the close, he asked Biden to come to the front of the church and asked Ebenezer’s congregants to pray for the president as he listed several of Biden’s legislative achievements.

“That, my friends, is God’s work,” said Warnock, adding that Biden “had a little something to do with it.”

As Biden begins to turn his

attention toward an expected 2024 reelection effort, Georgia is going to get plenty of his attention.

In 2020, Biden managed to win Georgia as well as closely contested Michigan and Pennsylvania, where Black votes made up a disproportionate share of the Democratic electorate. Turning out Black voters in those states will be essential to Biden’s 2024 hopes.

The White House has tried to promote Biden’s agenda in minority communities. The

In tornado-ravaged Selma, prayers of thanks

SELMA, Ala. (AP)—Leading Sunday services on the lawn outside his tornado-damaged Crosspoint Christian Church, the Rev. David Nichols told his congregation there was much for which to be grateful despite the destruction around them.

The storm system was blamed with killing nine people — two in Georgia and seven in rural Autauga County, Alabama where an estimated EF3 tornado, which is just two steps below the most powerful category of twister, tossed mobile homes into the air and ripped way roofs. The Selma twister, an estimated high-end EF2 with winds of 130 mph, cut a wide swath through the city, collapsing buildings and snapping trees in half.

Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey said Sunday that President Joe Biden had approved a major disaster declaration for the two hard-hit Alabama counties.

The hymn “Amazing Grace” floated across the lawn at Selma’s Crosspoint Church, where services were held outside because of the damage to the main sanctuary. The service also honored the quick-thinking teachers who got the children, ranging in age from infants to 5-year-

olds, to the building’s inner bathrooms and shielded them with their own bodies as the twister roared over them.

Sheila Stockman, a teacher at Crosspoint Christian daycare, said they made the decision to get the children to the bathroom when they saw the storm was headed for them.

“The walls started shaking and I told my class, ‘Lie down and close your eyes’ and I laid down on top of them until it was over,” Stockman said.

Stockman said the teachers tried to reassure the children as the tornado roared above.

“I was praying and I kept telling them, ‘It’s OK. I got you. You’re OK. I love y’all,’” Shana Lathan told her class as they huddled inside the bathroom.

When it was over, Stockman said they opened the bathroom door to see the sky above them and parts of the building gone. A room that held the preschoolers moments earlier was filled with rubble.

At historic Brown Chapel AME, congregation mem-

bers handed out plates of food, baby formula, diapers, water and other supplies Sunday afternoon.

“There are so many people hurting here right now that there is sort of like a mutual misery, which requires a shared hope and a shared vision to help us to help each other through this,” the Rev. Leodis Strong said.

His sermon for the day was titled “A Storm-Tested Faith.” Strong said the community’s faith is being tested because “this is an environment that we have to rely upon that relationship with God and put into practice the faith that we have developed.”

A bust of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. sits outside the church. As the nation marks King’s birthday, Strong said King’s message resonates through the disaster recovery.

“If anything, that ought to inspire and motivate us to practice our faith and our understanding of Dr. King’s commitment. So we’ll make it through this. We’re going to make it,” Strong said.

ACROSS THE NATION

House GOP demands visitor logs in Biden classified docs case.

WASHINGTON (AP)—Newly empowered House Republicans on Sunday demanded the White House turn over all information related to its searches that have uncovered classified documents at President Joe Biden’s home and former office in the wake of more records found at his Delaware residence.

“We have a lot of questions,” said Rep. James Comer, chairman of the House Oversight and Accountability Committee.

Comer, R-Ky., said he wants to see all documents and communications related to the searches by the Biden team, as well as visitor logs of the president’s home in Wilmington, Delaware, from Jan. 20, 2021, to present. He said the aim is to determine who might have had access to classified material and how the records got there.

The White House on Saturday said it had discovered five additional pages of classified documents at Biden’s home on Thursday, the same day a special counsel was appointed to review the matter.

Man’s death after arrest draws protest near police station

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—People protested outside a Memphis police station over a man’s death after a confrontation with police officers during a traffic stop.

Family, friends and supporters of Tyre D. Nichols released balloons Saturday to honor the life of the 29-year-old Memphis man and pro-

White House has cited efforts to encourage states to take equity into account for public works projects as they spend money from the administration’s \$1 trillion infrastructure bill. The administration also has acted to end sentencing disparity between crack and powder cocaine offenses, scrapping a policy widely seen as racist.

The administration also highlights Biden’s work to diversify the federal judiciary, including his appointment of Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson as the first Black woman to serve on the Supreme Court and the confirmation of 11 Black women judges to federal appeals courts — more than those installed to those powerful courts under all previous presidents combined.

tested outside a police station near the site of the Jan. 7 traffic stop.

The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation is conducting a use-of-force investigation at the request of Shelby County District Attorney General Steve Mulroy, bureau officials said last week. Nichols “succumbed to his injuries” on Tuesday, the agency said without describing the nature of his injuries.

Nichols, who was Black, was arrested after officers stopped him for reckless driving, police said. There was a confrontation as officers approached the driver and the suspect ran before he was confronted again by pursuing officers who arrested him, authorities said.

1 dead, 4 injured in shooting outside Houston club

HOUSTON (AP)—One person was killed and four others were wounded as dozens of shots were fired outside a Houston club early Sunday morning, authorities said.

Officials believe that just after 2 a.m. Sunday, shooters exited a vehicle and opened fire on people in the parking lot of the club, Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez said.

“It looks like over 50 shots were fired here, which is a very scary situation,” Gonzalez said, noting that a food truck was also nearby.

Gonzalez said that it appears that at least one AK-47 assault rifle was used during the shooting.

“This is pretty potent stuff that we are seeing out here on the streets,” he said.

Asia

Nepal mourns after deadly plane crash kills at least 66



Rescue workers recover the body of a victim of a passenger plane that crashed in Pokhara, Nepal, Sunday, Jan. 15, 2023. AP

POKHARA, Nepal (AP)—Nepal began a national day of mourning Monday, a day after a plane crashed while attempting to land at a newly opened airport, killing at least 66 of the 72 people aboard. Rescue workers repelled down a 300-meter gorge to continue the search for the six missing people.

Authorities revised the death toll down from Sunday's 68 after a recount early Monday morning, said Tek Bahadur K.C., a senior administrative officer in Kaski district. Rescue workers are also scouring the debris for the flight data recorder.

It remains unclear what caused the crash.

A witness who recorded footage of the plane's descent from his balcony said he saw the plane flying low before it suddenly veered to its left. "I

saw that and I was shocked... I thought that today everything will be finished here after it crashes, I will also be dead," said Diwas Bohora. After it crashed, red flames erupted and the ground shook violently, like an earthquake, Bohora said. "I was scared. Seeing that scene, I was scared."

Another witness said he saw the aircraft spinning violently in the air after it began descending to land, watching from the terrace of his house. Finally, Gaurav Gurung said, the plane fell nose-first towards its left and crashed into the gorge.

Nepal's Civil Aviation Authority said the aircraft last made contact with the airport from near Seti Gorge at 10:50 a.m. before crashing.

The twin-engine ATR 72 aircraft, operated by Nepal's Yeti

Airlines, was competing the 27-minute flight from the capital, Kathmandu, to Pokhara, 200 kilometers (125 miles) west. It was carrying 68 passengers, including 15 foreign nationals, as well as four crew members, Nepal's Civil Aviation Authority said in a statement. The foreigners included five Indians, four Russians, two South Koreans, and one each from Ireland, Australia, Argentina and France.

The bodies are being kept in the Pokhara Academy of Health and Science, Western Hospital. Gyan Khakda, a police spokesperson in the district, said 31 bodies have been identified and will be handed over to family after officials finish post mortem reports. The bodies of foreigners and those that are unrecognizable will be sent to Kathmandu for further investigation.

Report: Myanmar arms industry growing

BANGKOK (AP)—Companies from at least 13 countries have helped Myanmar build up its capacity to produce weapons that are being used to commit atrocities following a 2021 military takeover, independent international experts have found.

The report released Monday by the Special Advisory Council for Myanmar details how the country has stepped up arms production since the army seized power on Feb. 1, 2021, igniting a mass public opposition movement.

The army's takeover from elected civilian leaders reversed nearly a decade of progress toward democracy after 50 years of military rule. After security forces used lethal force against peaceful demonstrators, opponents of military rule took up arms. Some U.N. experts have characterized the

situation as a civil war.

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners has documented more than 2,700 civilian deaths in the violence, including 277 children, while more than 13,000 people have been detained. The true number is believed to be much higher.

Companies in the U.S., Europe, Asia and the Middle East are supporting the military supply chain, the report says, urging those businesses to ensure they are not facilitating human rights abuses.

The growth of the homegrown arms industry comes as some countries have enforced arms embargoes or sanctions against individuals and companies involved in trading or manufacturing arms.

In October, the U.S. Treasury imposed sanctions against Aung Moe Myint, a business-

man close to the army who it said facilitates arms deals on its behalf. His brother, Hlaing Moe Myint, and the trading company they founded, Dynasty International Company Ltd., were also targeted. One of its directors, Myo Thitsar, also was designated for sanctions.

In November, the U.S. imposed sanctions on aircraft suppliers to the military, citing deadly air strikes on civilians.

Myanmar has no private arms makers, so any such companies are run by the Ministry of Defense and Directorate of Defense Industries, the report said.

Local factories still can draw upon licensed technology and overseas supply chains, technical support and other backing, sometimes by sending equipment to Singapore and Taiwan for upgrading and maintenance, it said.

World

Ukraine building suffers deadliest civilian attack in several months

DNIPRO, Ukraine (AP)—The death toll from a Russian missile strike on an apartment building in the southeastern Ukrainian city of Dnipro rose to 30 Sunday, the national emergencies service reported as rescue workers scrambled to reach survivors in the rubble.

Emergency crews worked through the frigid night and all day at the multi-story residential building, where officials said about 1,700 people lived before Saturday's strike. The reported death toll made it the deadliest attack in one place since a Sept. 30 strike in Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia region, according to The Associated Press-Frontline War Crimes Watch project.

Russia also targeted the capital, Kyiv, and the northeastern city of Kharkiv during a widespread barrage the same day, ending a two-week lull in the airstrikes it has launched against Ukraine's power infrastructure and urban centers almost weekly since October.

Russia on Sunday acknowledged the missile strikes but did not mention the Dnipro apartment building. Russia has repeatedly denied targeting civilians in the war.

Russia fired 33 cruise mis-

siles on Saturday, of which 21 were shot down, according to Gen. Valerii Zaluzhnyi, the commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian armed forces. The missile that hit the apartment building was a Kh-22 launched from Russia's Kursk region, according to the military's air force command, adding that Ukraine does not have a system capable of intercepting that type of weapon.

In Dnipro, workers used a crane as they tried to rescue people trapped on upper floors of the apartment tower. Some residents signaled for help with lights on their mobile phones.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy reported that at least 73 people were wounded and 39 people had been rescued as of Sunday afternoon. The city government in Dnipro said 43 people were reported missing.

"Search and rescue operations and the dismantling of dangerous structural elements continues. Around the clock. We continue to fight for every life," Zelenskyy said.

Ivan Garnuk was in his apartment when the building was hit and said he felt

lucky to have survived. He described his shock that the Russians would strike a residential building with no strategic value.

"There are no military facilities here. There is nothing here," he said. "There is no air defense, there are no military bases here. It just hit civilians, innocent people."

Dnipro residents joined rescue workers at the scene to help clear the rubble. Others brought food and warm clothes for those who had lost their homes.

"This is clearly terrorism and all this is simply not human," one local, Artem Myzychenko, said as he cleared rubble.

Claiming responsibility for the missile strikes across Ukraine, Russia's Defense Ministry said Sunday that it achieved its goal.

"All designated targets have been hit. The goal of the attack has been achieved," a ministry statement posted on Telegram said. It said missiles were fired "on the military command and control system of Ukraine and related energy facilities," and did not mention the attack on the Dnipro residential building.

WORLD BRIEFS

Netanyahu moving ahead on legal overhaul despite outcry

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP)—Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday his government plans to charge ahead with an overhaul of the country's judicial system, despite fierce criticism from top legal officials and protests against the changes that drew tens of thousands of people.

Netanyahu, who is on trial for corruption, has made the legal changes the centerpiece of his new government's agenda and the surging opposition to them is presenting an early challenge for the Israeli leader. Opponents say the changes could help Netanyahu evade conviction in his corruption trial, or make the court case disappear altogether.

The overhaul would weaken the power of the Supreme Court, granting legislators the ability to pass laws the court has struck down with a simple majority, as well as give the government greater power over the appointment of judges and limit the independence of government legal advisers.

Palestinians say Israeli troops kill man in West Bank

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israeli troops shot and killed a Palestinian man in the occupied West Bank on Sunday following a struggle at a military checkpoint, the Palestinian Health Ministry said, the latest death in a monthslong spiral of violence between Israelis and Palestinians.

The circumstances of the shooting were in dispute. The Israeli army claimed the man tried to grab a soldier's weapon, while witnesses and relatives said he was shot while trying to defend himself during an inspection that turned violent.

The Israeli military said soldiers spotted what they deemed a suspicious vehicle that refused to stop for a "routine inspection" near the West Bank town of Silwad. A clash broke out when the soldiers attempted to detain one of the people in the vehicle, and soldiers opened fire when a passenger tried to grab a soldier's weapon.

Egypt hands out life jail terms in trial over 2019 protests

CAIRO (AP)—An Egyptian court on Sunday handed down life prison sentences to 38 people, including a self-exiled businessman whose social media posts helped to spark anti-government protests.

Public protests are rare in Egypt where President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi has overseen a wide-ranging crackdown on dissent. But a series of video and other social media posts by Egyptian businessman Mohamed Ali, who now lives in Spain, led to scattered street demonstrations in September 2019 over allegations of corruption and other issues.

Twenty-three of those who got life terms were tried in absentia, including Ali, according to an Egyptian criminal court handling terrorism-related cases.

The court also sentenced 44 others including children to terms ranging from five to 15 years in prison over the same charges. Twenty-one were acquitted, according to defense lawyer Ossama Badawi.

Overdrive

The 2023 Kia EV6 GT is fast as sin—thank goodness

By LARRY PRINTZ
Tribune News Service

LAS VEGAS—Most of us travel to Sin City to lose too much money gambling. I, for one, do not. I head to the Las Vegas Motor Speedway, a lovely bit of concrete and blacktop in the Nevada desert that helps me satisfy my need for speed. In particular, I head for the dragstrip. It's here that long ago that I pulled a 10.4-second quarter-mile time at 140 mph in a 2022 Ford Mustang Shelby GT500. Officially, the car runs 0-60 mph in 3.3 seconds. It's so fast, so furious, and so mind-numbingly fun, it doesn't go quietly into the night.

But the 2023 Kia EV6 GT, the car I traveled here to drive, does go quietly into the night, if only because it's a pure battery electric car. And while the Shelby boasts 760 horsepower, the Kia EV6 GT has a mere 576 horsepower, which on paper appears to be a disadvantage. But it isn't. According to Kia, the EV6 GT runs 0-60 mph in 3.4 seconds. In fact, I was able to run the quarter mile at the Las Vegas dragstrip doing an 11.6-second quarter mile at 120 mph. The EV6 GT's performance is akin to that of pricey Italian hypercars, yet it's a midsize, five-door hatchback.

And it recharges as quickly as it runs. Its 800-volt system architecture allows for fast charging of up to 235 kW, allowing you to recharge from



The 2023 Kia EV6 GT. (Kia/TNS)

10% to 80% of battery capacity in 18 minutes using a DC fast-charger.

The 2023 Kia EV6 GT is the highest performance variant of the Kia EV6, which is confusingly offered in GT-Line trim; think of that as the one that wears jogging attire, but never jogs. In contrast, the EV6 GT has more ponies under its poncho than such muscle car stalwarts as the Ford Mustang GT or Dodge Challenger Scat Pack. In fact, Kia claims it out-accelerates a Ferrari Roma and Lamborghini Huracan Evo Spyder RWD. I wouldn't doubt it for a second. And the EV6 GT is a practical hatchback, with all-wheel drive and a design that evokes some funky-styled

European metal of days gone by, albeit modernized to a degree that instantly allows it to brilliantly stand apart from its competition.

It's wrapped around Hyundai Motor Group's E-GMP modular skateboard platform that's shared with the Hyundai Ioniq 5, Ioniq 6 and Genesis GV60. As such, it's fitted with an electronically controlled suspension and a limited-slip rear differential with torque vectoring. The brakes are larger than trash can lids—measuring 15 inches up front and 14.2 inches in the rear—and are sheathed in 21-inch Z-rated Goodyear Eagle F1s. All that speed and grippy rubber does affect its range, which is rated at 206 miles, not as much

as 310 miles claimed by other EV6 variants.

Power comes courtesy of a pair of axle-mounted, AC synchronous electric motors that generate 576 horsepower 545 pound-feet of torque. But there's a catch. The only way to fully extract all that current is to hit the little green GT button on the steering wheel. Otherwise, in normal and sport driving modes, you'll get "only" 430 horsepower. Also, the GT button sets the car to handle your wildest behavior, adjusting the cars systems to handle all that instant torque. The steering gets sharper, the throttle responds quicker, the ... well, you get the idea.

Press the throttle and hang onto your dentures; this puppy

flies. It all happens so quickly and with such swift force, you'd swear your internal organs are pressing against your backbone. And it's so quiet; really, really quiet. When was sin ever carried out so silently?

As you'd expect, the EV6 GT's cabin is indulgently spacious. It should be; its wheelbase is the same length as the noticeably larger Kia Telluride. But it requires fewer parts, so there's more room for people. Its vibe is minimalist, yet modern, and is dominated by a large, horizontal screen that houses a 12.3-inch reconfigurable gauge cluster and an equally large infotainment touchscreen. And it has all the mod cos, like front and rear heated seats, a head-up

display, wireless charging and other goodies. I could list them all, but trust me, you'll be indulged.

Keep in mind that all of this goodness comes at a price, in this case, \$61,600, or \$3,100 less than a base Chevrolet Corvette. And the Kia is faster.

And it's that sort of stat that raises questions. What's the new performance paradigm for sports cars? Do sports cars become strictly track time playthings? If your new electric EV6 GT hatchback can keep pace with a fossil-fueled sports car, what's the reasoning for buying the latter? I can't say that I have the answer—yet.

That said, there's plenty of reason to buy the former; the EV6 GT is one exciting EV.

NUTS & BOLTS

- 2023 Kia EV6 GT
- Base price: \$61,600
- Powertrain: Front and rear AC Synchronous Permanent Magnet Motors
- Horsepower/Torque: 576/545 pound-feet
- Range: 206 miles
- Charging rate (240 volts): 7 hours, 10 minutes
- Length/Width/Height: 184.8/74.4/60.8 inches
- Ground clearance: 6.1 inches
- Payload: 937 pounds
- Cargo capacity: 24.4-50.2 cubic feet
- Towing capacity: 2,300 pounds

Why won't song titles show up in car?

Q: New cars do not seem to have CD players, including my 2019 Hyundai Sonata, so I copied more than 2,000 songs from the 1940s (I am 87) on a 128 GB thumb drive and the screen shows "No title No info" when I insert the thumb drive. The dealer said he doesn't have a clue. Do you?

J.B., Monument, Colorado

A: You didn't mention what application you used to copy the CD music (CDA files) to your thumb drive. In order to play, they must be converted to a different format. Unless you use Microsoft Media Player or other conversion software, the song titles may not copy over. You may see only labels like track 01 or track 02, for instance.

Q: You recently commented on a subject that trips my trigger. As any designer with a brain cell would know, handicapped-accessible parking should be located between the entrance door and the exit door. At Centennial Hills Home Depot in Las Vegas, it is located out in right field with the entrance door at first base and the exit door at third base forcing those who use it to walk the farthest of anyone. I complained to the customer service department at the store and received a blank stare and an email address for corporate customer service. My email got zip in return. I recently noticed that a local Costco just reduced the number of handicapped-accessible parking spaces next to the front door from 24 to 6. We really are second-class citizens.

G.H., Chicago

A: Twenty-four may be more spaces than needed but designated handicapped-accessible parking should always be located

near the entrance/exit. While we are addressing pet peeves, I have yet to see a ticket on a vehicle without a handicapped-person license plate or card hanging from the mirror parked in a designated space.

Q: Last year I bought a new 2021 Honda CR-V, which now has 32,000 miles. I was recently told I need to have a brake fluid flush every 30,000 miles (\$165). I am a 75-year-old and have owned cars for the past 50 years, and never once was I told I needed a brake line flush. I have never had a brake problem with any prior cars, and no problem with this car. Why is this all of a sudden a maintenance issue?

M.O., Lake Bluff, Illinois

A: Since brake fluid is hygroscopic, it attracts water. Water is the nemesis since it can boil, vaporize and cause poor braking. Moisture may also corrode internal parts. But this occurs over time, not mileage. For a 1-year-old car, it seems rather premature to flush the fluid.

Q: We have a 2019 Buick Envision with the 2.5-liter, 4-cylinder engine. My question centers around oils. It asks for Dexos to be used and I am wondering if other synthetics could be used without doing harm to the engine. Is there really any difference?

L.D., Burnsville, Minnesota.

A: Any brand of oil that meets the Dexos specification is fine to use in your car. Dexos will be stated on the bottle's label. There is not much of a difference among brands and all are safe to use. I can't provide a list because it would be too long and take up the whole column plus columns for the next few weeks.

MOTORMOUTH

BY BOB WEBER
Tribune News Service



Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. Weber's work has appeared in professional trade magazines and various consumer publications including Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest. Send questions along with name and town to motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.



In order to play CDA files properly in your car, they must first be converted to a different format. Unless you use Microsoft Media Player or other conversion software, the song titles may not copy over. You may see only labels like track 01 or track 02, for instance.

Life & Style

Miss USA R'Bonney Gabriel wins Miss Universe competition

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—R'Bonney Gabriel, a fashion designer, model and sewing instructor from Texas who competition officials said is the first Filipino American to win Miss USA, was crowned Miss Universe on Saturday night.

Gabriel closed her eyes and clasped hands with runner-up Miss Venezuela, Amanda Dudamel, at the moment of the dramatic reveal of the winner, then beamed after her name was announced.

Thumping music rang out, and she was handed a bouquet of flowers, draped in the winner's sash and crowned with a tiara onstage at the 71st Miss Universe competition, held in New Orleans.

In the Q&A at the last stage of the competition for the three finalists, Gabriel was asked how she would work to demonstrate Miss Universe is "an empowering and progressive organization" if she were to win.

"I would use it to be a transformational leader," she responded, citing her work using recycled materials in her fashion design and teaching sewing to survivors of human trafficking and domestic violence. "It is so important to invest in others, invest in our community



Miss USA R'Bonney Gabriel reacts as she is crowned Miss Universe during the final round of the 71st Miss Universe Beauty Pageant, in New Orleans on Saturday, Jan. 14, 2023. (AP Photo/Gerald Herbert)

and use your unique talent to make a difference."

Rights to the pageant—once partly owned by former President Donald Trump—were

bought last year by a Thai business tycoon and transgender activist for \$20 million from IMG Worldwide LLC, a New York-based sports and talent market-

ing company.

Chakrapong "Anne" Chakrajutathib, who controls JKN Global Group Public Co. Ltd., is a reality show star in Thailand who is outspoken about being a transgender woman.

Chakrajutathib said when the purchase was announced in October that she wanted to "evolve the brand for the next generation."

According to Miss Universe, Gabriel is a former high school volleyball player and graduate of the University of North Texas. A short bio posted on the organization's website said she is also CEO of her own sustainable clothing line.

"We all have something special, and when we plant those seeds to other people in our life, we transform them and we use that as a vehicle for change," Gabriel said.

Nearly 90 contestants from around the world took part in the competition, organizers said, involving "personal statements, in depth interviews and various categories including evening gown & swimwear."

The second runner-up was Miss Dominican Republic, Andreea Martinez.

Miss Curacao, Gabriela Dos Santos, and Miss Puerto Rico, Ashley Carino, rounded out the top five finalists.

'Wakanda Forever' scores 12 NAACP Image Award noms

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Black Panther: Wakanda Forever" earned 12 NAACP Image Awards nominations on Thursday, while "The Woman King" and "Abbott Elementary" will enter next month's ceremony as other top nominees.

The "Black Panther" sequel—which found blockbuster success—led all film nominees. The Marvel film delved into the concept of Wakanda's grief in the wake of the death of T'Challa—a character played by Chadwick Boseman, who died in 2020.

The film "The Woman King" starring Viola Davis and the ABC television series "Abbott Elementary" with Quinta Brunson each received nine nods. Both Davis and Brunson are nominated for entertainer of the year along with

Mary J. Blige, Zendaya and Angela Bassett.

The awards honoring entertainers and writers of color will air live in Pasadena, California, on BET on Feb. 25 at 8 p.m. EST. The two-hour show will be held in front of an audience for the first time in three years.

"This year's nominees have conveyed a wide range of authentic stories and diverse experiences that have resonated with many in our community," said Derrick Johnson, the president and CEO of the NAACP. "We're proud to recognize their outstanding achievements and performances."

"Wakanda Forever" and "The Woman King" will compete for outstanding motion picture along with "A Jazzman's Blues," "Till" and "Emancipation."

Prince Harry: Memoir is about saving royals from themselves

LONDON (AP)—Prince Harry has said he had enough material for two memoirs, but that he held back because he didn't think his father and brother would "ever forgive" him.

In an interview with British newspaper The Telegraph published Saturday, he also said that releasing his memoir wasn't an attempt "to collapse the monarchy. This is about trying to save them from themselves."

"And I know that I will get

crucified by numerous people for saying that," he said.

Harry's candid autobiography, "Spare," sold 1.4 million English-language copies on the first day it was published. Many of its revelations and accusations were splashed across the global media this week. In the book, the 38-year-old revealed how his grief at the death of his mother, Princess Diana, affected him, and saw Harry detail his resentment at

being the "spare to the heir."

"It could have been two books, put it that way," Harry said in the interview. "But there are some things that have happened, especially between me and my brother, and to some extent between me and my father, that I just don't want the world to know. Because I don't think they would ever forgive me."

Harry also said in the interview that he worried about William's children, saying he

felt "a responsibility knowing that out of those three children, at least one will end up like me, the spare. And that hurts, that worries me."

He said he felt this way despite William making it clear to him that "his kids are not my responsibility."

Buckingham Palace and Kensington Palace haven't commented on Harry's book or his string of media interviews to publicize it.

Mother has kept identity of son's father a secret

DEAR ABBY: Thirty years ago, I had an affair with "Roger," a married man. We worked together and fell in love. At the time, Roger was married with three children. My husband and I were separated, and I had one son. The 15-year age gap between us didn't matter to me. I admired him. Roger was soft-spoken, intelligent and a gentleman. He was of Christian faith, so when he decided to divorce his wife, his partners held an intervention and bought out his equity in the company, which forced him to move out of state.

Roger was a great person and struggled with the thought of leaving his family. I understood, and we parted ways. I kept informed about him as much as possible over the years but never contacted him, and we lived in different states. When he left, I was pregnant, but I didn't tell him because so much was going on and I didn't want the baby to be a tool. I had a son, reconciled with my husband and never told a soul. Eight years after that, my husband and I divorced.

Although I tried, I never found the courage to reach out to Roger. Five years ago, I visited the state where he lived. I even went to his office, but did not reach out. I recently had several dreams about him and couldn't stop thinking of him. They seemed so real.

I looked Roger up online and found out he died a year ago. I am devastated and feel guilty for not giving my son the opportunity to know his father. Roger has other children. At this point, should I let them know or should I just leave everything alone?

My biggest fear is causing pain to his wife. She is a good person and doesn't deserve this.

HOLDING MANY SECRETS

DEAR HOLDING: What is to be gained by making an announcement at this late date? As you stated, it won't provide your son the opportunity to know his father. And receiving shocking news at this point will only cause Roger's widow pain. However, I would do another internet search to see if you can find out what killed Roger. If it's something that could be passed down to your son, warn him. Otherwise, I'm voting for leaving everything alone.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: Over the past two years, a friend I have felt very close to over the years has gone downhill. "Nancy" thinks her neighbors have placed listening devices in her apartment, have entered her place illegally and taken things, and are in general malevolent. I have my own troubles and burdens in my life, and this change in her leaves me feeling frightened, powerless and overwhelmed.

I have stepped back, but a mutual friend tells me Nancy feels abandoned and betrayed by me. I'm afraid if I reach out, I'll be sorry. But on the other hand, I never have said goodbye. Nancy has a therapist now, and I lift her up in prayer a lot. What do you suggest I do, if anything?

FAILED FRIEND IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR ABBY

BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



DEAR FRIEND: Your prayers have been answered. Nancy is now in the care of a therapist and may improve. If the only reason you would be contacting her is to say goodbye, I think it would be cruel. If you would like to check in from time to time, ask how she's doing and offer some warmth and encouragement, then give her a call.

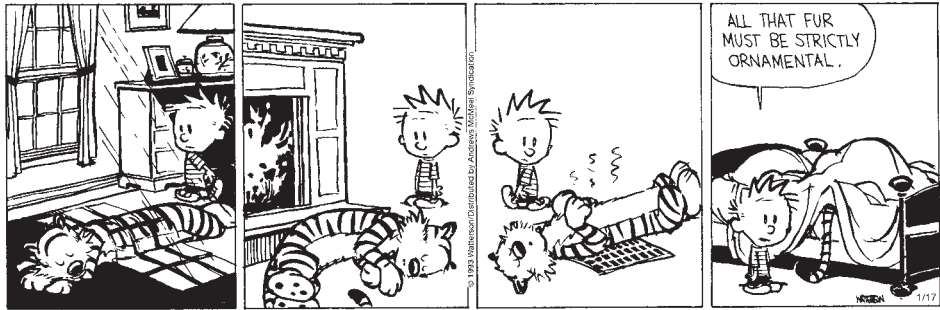
■■■■

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

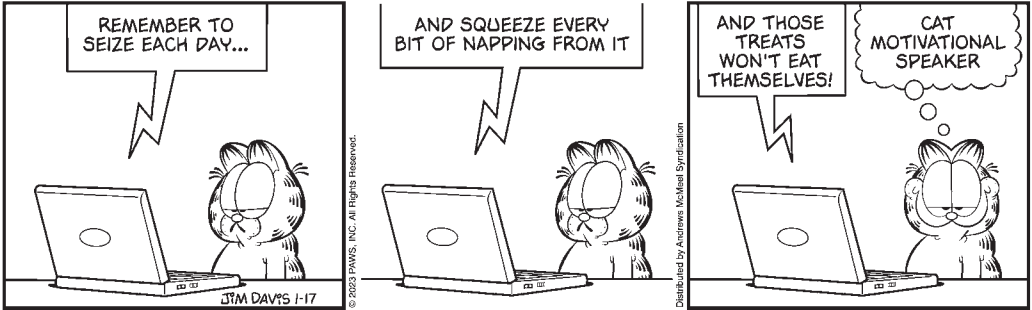
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



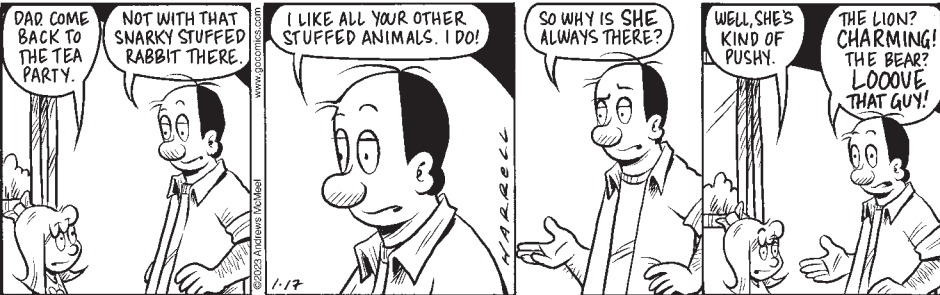
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Green gem
5 Police officer
8 Pretzel seasoning
12 Israeli airline
13 Mine yield
14 Jai —
15 Golfer's hazard
17 Iditarod terminus
18 Chiding sound
19 Long time
20 Concepts
21 Matching pair
22 Moreover
23 May honorees
26 Enthusiastic approval
30 Bridge
31 Opening
32 — bene
33 Hot alcoholic drinks
35 Man of morals?
36 Shriver of tennis
37 Brit. sports cars

DOWN

1 Bit of banter
2 Regretably
3 Like a dungeon
4 Days of yore
5 French landscape painter
6 Algerian port
7 Zing
8 Desert formations
9 Skin soother
10 Tibetan monk
11 Alliances
16 Golf props
20 Chef Garten
21 Abrasive sheet
22 Jungfrau, e.g.
23 Rockies hrs.
24 GI's address
25 Irate
26 — de deux
27 Two, in Toledo
28 Olympic skater
29 Spigot
31 Prized possession
34 Author Fleming
35 Mellowed
37 Calendar page
38 Nest egg
39 Tide variety
40 Irene of "Fame"
41 Get bent out of shape
42 Rani's dress
43 End-of-week letters
44 "Hey, you!"
46 "You Send Me" singer
47 Glitch

Solution time: 22 mins.

Yesterday's answer 1-17

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Zooey Deschanel, 43; Michelle Obama, 59; Jim Carrey, 61; Steve Harvey, 66.

Happy Birthday: If you help without asking for something in return, the rewards will surpass your expectations. A change of heart will occur if you appreciate the little things in life that put a smile on your face. Put your energy into personal growth, fitness and health, and you'll accumulate momentum that will carry you throughout the year and beyond. Live life your way. Your numbers are 4, 11, 17, 24, 31, 35, 42.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Your creative drive will push you above and beyond your dreams, but before you sprint toward the finish line, consider the logistics behind your plans. Recognize your skills and where best to apply them before you accept a challenge. Avoid emotional spending. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): An unexpected change will limit your achievement. Look for an alternative route, and reach out to those who owe you a favor. Keeping up will require skill, precision and a unique way of approaching your goal. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You've got your mojo in high gear and are on the road to victory. Concentrate on what's most important to you to avoid taking on too much and falling short. Call in experts to handle what you can't do yourself. Learn from experience. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Don't make a faux pas because you are underprepared and overly confident. Pay attention to detail, and strive to put your imprint on whatever you pursue. You may not

like change, but it's necessary to come out on top. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Rewards are apparent. Plan to do things you enjoy. Attend a function that allows you to mix business with pleasure or to expand your circle of friends. You'll make an impression on someone important if you follow through with your promises. *****

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't mix emotions with responsibilities. It's best to clear your calendar before you take on a new project. An unusual conversation will offer insight that reconstructs how you think and proceed. Validate what you hear before passing it along. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Show off what you have to offer. Don't limit what you can do because you are scared or intimidated by someone unpredictable. Consider what and who moves you, then head in that direction. Today it's necessary to give up something in order to grow. *****

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Expect to face opposition at home and when dealing with partners. Refuse to let your emotions jump in and take over. Giving someone the upper hand will make your journey difficult. Be direct, make your intentions clear and proceed. Protect your health. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Question your motives before you make a move. Your heart must be in the right place to get the best results. An improvement at home will give you the space you need to take on a new project that can raise your income. ***

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Observe, listen and be reasonable. Overreacting will put you in a precarious position. Keep life simple, make positive changes at home and set up a plan to help you save for something important. Take better care of your health and loved ones. *****

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Take a moment to collect your thoughts and consider how best to respond to what's happening around you. Don't be afraid to take the road less traveled. Be secretive regarding your plans until you have everything in place. Walk away from toxic relationships. **

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Let your creativity lead the way. Presenting who you are and what you can do will attract attention. An opportunity to travel and meet with someone who recognizes your talents and values your input will change how you work and play. *****

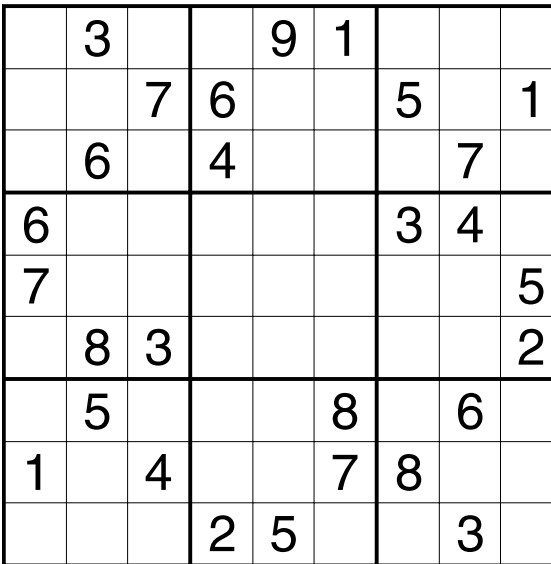
Birthday Baby: You are conscientious, adaptable and caring. You are innovative and assertive.

☉: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ☿: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ☼: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ☽: Aim high; start new projects. ☹: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green



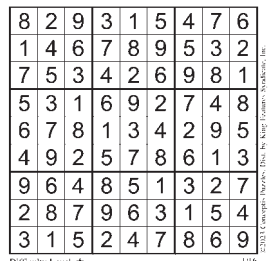
Difficulty Level ★★

1/17

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Friday's Answer



Difficulty Level ★

1/16

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

IN A TIGHT SPOT

Solution: 7 letters

S D D R T N E M A C I D E R P
S E E E E S P E L D D U M L I
I P C X L B R T R I A H A T C
T P A N E F O A O R P C J H K
U A W C A L F O C U E T D G L
A R K H E T P A K L G I N I E
T T W A O A C S R B C H O I L K
I S A I E L E M E R C H A O B P I
O T R C R U U B U P E U L L G
N I D E A T S E A C O N G E L
O C N S S C S V V R R D R H I
T K G T S H I L T O R I R O T
E Y U O I L G O R B M I C A C
S C L O S E D S Y D E M E R H
K O B S T A C L E H C N U R C

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Area, Assist, Awkward, Baffled, Barrier, Bind, Cars, Caught, Choices, Circumstances, Closed, Clutch, Corner, Crunch, Glitch, Hard, Help, Hitch, Hole, Imbroglio, Issue, Jam, Lip, Move, Muddle, Notes, Obstacle, Perplexed, Pickle, Place, Plight, Predicament, Rebook, Remedy, Rock, Situation, Solve, Space, Sticky, Strapped, Stuck, Stumble, Tough, Trouble

Yesterday's Answer: Crossings

To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 56 through 70, order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

Hubbard's 98-yard fumble return lifts Bengals over Ravens



CINCINNATI (AP)—Sam Hubbard returned Tyler Huntley's fumble 98 yards

for a tiebreaking touchdown in the fourth quarter, helping Joe Burrow and the Cincinnati Bengals beat the Baltimore Ravens 24-17 in an AFC wild-card game on Sunday night.

Facing third-and-goal at the 1 with about 12 minutes left, Huntley tried to go over the top of the line for the go-ahead score. But he was stood up by Germaine Pratt and stripped by fellow linebacker Logan Wilson.

The ball went right to Hubbard at the 2, and the defensive end took off down the field for the longest fumble return for a touchdown in NFL postseason history. It also was the longest go-ahead TD in the fourth quarter in the postseason.

Moments after the play by the Cincinnati native, with the Paycor Stadium crowd of 66,399 still buzzing, Hubbard sucked on oxygen as he sat on the bench on the sideline.

"Just a credit to whoever punched that ball out. I was in the right place at the right time," Hubbard said.

Baltimore drove down to the Cincinnati 17 in the final minute, but Kevin Zeitler was flagged for holding and Huntley threw incomplete to the end zone on the final play.

Playing behind a patchwork offensive line, Burrow passed for 209 yards and a touchdown for the AFC North champions. He also had a 1-yard touchdown run a week after the Bengals beat the Ravens 27-16 in the regular-season finale.

"Hard-fought. That's how it is in the playoffs, especially when you play a divisional team for a third time," Burrow said. "It's never going to be easy. They know us. We know them. It's nice to get the win."

Next up for Cincinnati (13-4) is a trip to Buffalo for a rematch of their Week 17 game that was canceled after Bills safety Damar Hamlin went into cardiac arrest on the field. With Hamlin watching from home, Buffalo advanced with a 34-31 victory over Miami on Sunday.

Playing without Lamar Jackson once again because of the quarterback's knee injury, Baltimore (10-8) managed two offensive touchdowns for the first time since Nov. 27. Huntley passed for 226 yards and two TDs, but he also had a costly interception.

Hubbard's dramatic trip to the end zone sent the Ravens into a uncertain offseason centered around the future of Jackson, who is eligible for free agency. The 2019 MVP got hurt during a 10-9 win against



Baltimore Ravens quarterback Tyler Huntley, right, fumbles the ball as it is knocked away by Cincinnati Bengals linebacker Logan Wilson (55) in the second half of an NFL wild-card playoff football game in Cincinnati, Sunday, Jan. 15, 2023.

Denver on Dec. 4, and he did not travel with the team to Cincinnati for the playoff game.

Huntley was intercepted by Cincinnati linebacker Akeem Davis-Gaither on the second attempt of his first postseason start. The Bengals turned the miscue into Burrow's 7-yard touchdown pass to Ja'Marr Chase early in the second quarter, but they had to settle for a 9-0 lead after Evan McPherson missed the extra point.

Bills 34, Dolphins 31

In Orchard Park, NY, Josh Allen and the Buffalo Bills opened the season with Super Bowl aspirations.

One week into the playoffs, their objective remains in sight — but barely.

Allen shrugged off a three-turnover outing, and the three-time defending AFC East champion Bills avoided a major collapse by rallying for a 34-31 victory over the AFC's seventh-seeded and injury-depleted Miami Dolphins in a wild-card playoff game on Sunday.

In acknowledging he was hardly at his best, Allen said all that mattered was the final score.

"One-week seasons, man, that's it," he said. "All that matters is surviving and advancing. Doesn't matter how we win, it's if we win."

The "if" part of the equation hung in the balance until the final minutes of a game in which the Bills squandered a 17-0 lead against an opponent that limped into the playoffs by losing five of its final six and was down to its third-string

quarterback, rookie Skylar Thompson.

It wasn't until Allen's fumble was returned 5 yards for a touchdown by Zach Sieler 61 seconds into the third quarter to put the Dolphins up 24-20 that the Bills' offense finally reawakened.

Allen threw two touchdown passes over a span of 3:11, with Cole Beasley scoring the go-ahead TD with a 6-yard catch, before Gabe Davis extended the lead to 34-24 with a 23-yard TD reception.

"That's just playoff football for the most part. All the games I've played in the playoffs, I don't even know if we've had a blowout," Beasley said. "The thing is you've got to keep your foot on the gas. You can't ever get complacent. You gotta play consistent. We were a little inconsistent tonight. We can't do that going forward."

The game wasn't decided until Buffalo's defense, which forced six punts and two turnovers, stopped Miami as it turned the ball over on downs on its final possession.

Thompson's pass on fourth-and-6 went just off the fingertips of tight end Mike Gesicki with 2:22 remaining.

Buffalo ran out the clock when Devin Singletary bulled his way for a 7-yard gain to convert a third-and-7.

It was a sloppy game and a lengthy saga lasting nearly four hours between two division rivals, and the outcome fitting after the two teams split their regular-season series in games decided by a combined five points. The Dolphins beat Buffalo 21-19 at Miami in September, with the Bills rallying to beat Miami 32-29 last month.

Allen finished 23 of 39 for 352 yards and three TDs, but also threw two interceptions, which resulted in the Dolphins scoring 11 points.

Buffalo advances to host the third-seeded Cincinnati Bengals next Sunday in the divisional round. Three weeks earlier, the Bills' game against the Bengals in Cincinnati was canceled when Buffalo safety Damar Hamlin went into cardiac arrest and needed to be resuscitated on the field. Hamlin is recovering and watched Sunday's game at home.

The Dolphins played tough in a game they entered as 13 1/2-point underdogs, according to FanDuel Sportsbook, without numerous offensive starters, including quarterback Tua Tagovailoa, who is still in the concussion protocol, and backup Teddy Bridgewater who is dealing with a dislocated pinky finger.

"That was the hand that was dealt, and that was part of the story that we were willing to complete," coach Mike McDaniels said. "I'm heartbroken for the guys because they didn't want their season to end and they did everything they could."

Giants 31, Vikings 34

In Minneapolis, first-year head coach Brian Daboll had his upstart team fully prepared. Daniel Jones played at a level well beyond his experience.

The New York Giants came confidently into Minnesota's raucous stadium and beat the tight-finish masters at their own game.

Jones passed for 301 yards

and two touchdowns and ran for 78 yards in his first career playoff game for the Giants in a 31-24 wild-card round victory on Sunday that gave the Vikings their first loss in 12 one-score games this season.

"A cornerstone franchise like this with such a rich history, this is what we're supposed to do," wide receiver Darius Slayton said. "We're supposed to go to the playoffs. We're supposed to be a winning team. We're just going to keep trying to live up to the legacy that's been here."

Saquon Barkley rushed for two scores, including the tiebreaker midway through the fourth quarter. Jones became the first quarterback in NFL history to hit these thresholds in a postseason game: 300-plus yards passing, two-plus passing touchdowns and 70-plus yards rushing.

"He's a special player," said Barkley, who had 109 total yards on only 14 touches. "This is where you can create your legacy in the playoffs, and what a way to start it off."

The defense finished off the franchise's first playoff win since the Super Bowl 11 years ago by swarming tight end T.J. Hockenson at mid-field after a 3-yard reception from Kirk Cousins on fourth-and-8 to force a turnover on downs with 1:44 to go and no timeouts left for the Vikings (13-5).

The Giants (10-7-1) advanced to play No. 1 seed and NFC East rival Philadelphia in the divisional round next Saturday night. They converted seven of 13 third downs and had their way

with a Vikings defense that has been vulnerable all season, averaging 8.3 yards per play in the first half.

"I think we've had some of our better games recently and found some stuff that works for us," said Jones, who had touchdown passes to Isaiah Hodgins and Daniel Bellinger. "So we'll keep doing it. I thought the coaching staff did a great job having us prepared."

Cousins went 31 for 39 for 273 yards and two scores and a rushing touchdown to cap the game's opening possession, the too-short throw to Hockenson his one glaring mistake. Cousins was more upset by his placement on the third-and-8 pass to K.J. Osborn—who had a first-half touchdown catch — that was knocked down by Cor'Dale Flott.

"There was always belief. I think that's why it hurts, because you expect to find a way, especially the way this team has gone all year," said Cousins, who called this "probably the toughest loss" of his 11-year career after going an NFL-record 11-0 in one-score games in the regular season.

Five years and one day after Case Keenum's 61-yard last-play touchdown pass to Stefon Diggs gave the Vikings a 29-24 victory over New Orleans in the divisional round, Cousins finally got a postseason game in Minnesota in his fifth season with the team.

The Vikings stayed on brand by facing 10-point deficits late in the second quarter and again early in the third quarter.

Cousins, who delivered all kinds of on-target throws as he was knocked to the turf by the blitz-fueled Giants defense, hit Irv Smith Jr. for a touchdown that brought the Vikings within 24-21.

Then came the unusual—the defense got a stop.

Danielle Hunter's sack forced the first Giants punt, and the Vikings went the other way for the tying field goal. They left behind some crucial points, though, when Cousins ran successful sneak on fourth-and-1 at the 15 that was negated by a false start on left tackle Christian Darrisaw.

Jones converted a penalty-free fourth-and-1 sneak on the next drive for the Giants. Barkley chugged into the end zone for the lead with 7:47 to go.

"There were real tears in there," first-year coach Kevin O'Connell said outside the locker room. "There are guys that expected to have a chance to win a world championship. You've got to give the Giants a lot of credit."

Jokic's late 3 lifts Nuggets past Magic, 119-116

DENVER (AP)—Nikola Jokic hit a go-ahead 3-pointer with 1.2 seconds remaining, capping his 12th triple-double of the season, and the Denver Nuggets won their 13th in a row at home by beating the Orlando Magic 119-116 on Sunday night.

Jokic connected from the top of the key, stepping back to get the shot away over Franz Wagner to finish with 17 points, 14 assists and 10 rebounds. It was his 88th career triple-double.

"He stepped back, got the space and just shot over the top," said Aaron Gordon, whose 25 points led the Nuggets. "It was a beautiful shot."

Added Jokic: "It was a good feeling because we won the game basically."

Gordon's final points came on a pair of free throws that gave the Nuggets a 116-115 lead with 16 seconds remaining. Jamal Murray added 18 points.

Markelle Fultz had 20 points for the Magic and made one of two free throws with 14 seconds left to play to tie it at 116, setting the stage for Jokic's shot. Wagner added 19 points and Paolo Banchero had 18. Magic coach Jamahl Mosley said he liked the way his team fought back after falling behind at the half, and noted it took a superb play by Jokic at the end to beat them.

"To be on the back end of a five-game road trip and to give that intensity and that effort, coming down the stretch, where an MVP-type player makes the MVP-type play, that's what it came down to," said Mosley, whose club closed out a 2-3 road swing.

Down by 15 at the half, the Magic pulled within six points on Wagner's layup just before the close of the third quarter.

Orlando went in front 103-102 with 7:47 remaining on a dunk by Bol Bol off an alley-oop pass from Cole Anthony. Bol had seven points in just over a minute to help push Orlando in front, but the game remained tight with the teams trading the lead down the stretch.

Michael Porter Jr., who fin-



Denver Nuggets center Nikola Jokic, left, looks to drive to the basket as Orlando Magic center Wendell Carter Jr. defends in the first half of an NBA basketball game Sunday, Jan. 15, 2023, in Denver.

ished with 16 points, connected on his four 3 pointers in the first half, helping the Nuggets take a 69-54 lead. Jokic had nine assists in the first half, matching the Magic's team total in the first two periods.

76ers 113, Lakers 112

In Los Angeles, LeBron James became the second player in NBA history to score 38,000 career points, but Joel Embiid had 35 points and 11 rebounds while Philadelphia held off Los Angeles for its seventh win in nine games.

Russell Westbrook failed to get off a clean shot or a pass in the final second under defense from Embiid, allowing the 76ers to hold on for their fourth straight road win. James Harden added 24 points and 13 assists for Philadelphia, which swept the season series and beat Los Angeles for the sixth straight time.

James put up 35 points, 10 assists and eight rebounds for the Lakers, who have lost three straight after a five-game winning streak.

James surpassed 38,000 points with a jumper that was

part of his 8-for-9 start with 16 points in the first quarter. The Lakers crowd gave him an ovation when the milestone was announced in the next timeout break, and Philadelphia coach Doc Rivers laughingly hugged James in celebration.

Bulls 132, Warriors 118

In Chicago, Nikola Vucevic matched a career high with 43 points and Chicago snapped an 11-game losing streak against Golden State.

Vucevic last scored 43 points on Feb. 2, 2021, against the Bulls as a member of the Orlando Magic.

Chicago beat Golden State for the first time since March 2, 2017.

Zach LaVine added 27 points despite shooting 1 for 8 from 3-point range as the Bulls (20-24) snapped a three-game losing streak. They won without leading scorer DeMar DeRozan, who missed his third consecutive game due to a right quad strain.

Klay Thompson scored 26 points and Stephen Curry added 20 for Golden State (21-22), which has dropped

four of its last five games. The Warriors committed 23 turnovers that led to 31 points.

Trail Blazers 140, Mavericks 123

In Portland, Ore., Damian Lillard scored 40 points and Portland beat Dallas to earn consecutive wins for the first time since mid-December.

It was the second game of a back-to-back between the teams. Portland snapped a five-game losing streak with a 136-119 victory on Saturday in the first game.

The Mavericks rested star Luka Doncic, who had a season-low 15 points in 35 minutes in Saturday night's loss. But it came after a double-overtime win against the Lakers in Los Angeles on Thursday, when he played 53 minutes and had 35 points, 14 rebounds and 13 assists.

Doncic has missed five games this season, all second games of back-to-backs.

Clippers 121, Rockets 100

In Los Angeles, Terance Mann scored a career-high 31 points, Kawhi Leonard

added 30, and Los Angeles extended Houston's season-worst skid to 10 straight games.

Both teams were short-handed. Houston starters Jalen Green and Jae'Sean Tate served one-game suspensions for leaving the bench area during an on-court altercation in Friday's loss at Sacramento.

The Clippers were missing starters Paul George (right hamstring soreness) and Marcus Morris (left knee contusion). They had lost eight of nine.

Eric Gordon led the Rockets with 24 points. Kenyon Martin Jr. had 22 points and nine rebounds and Alperen Sengun had 15 points, eight rebounds and six assists.

The Clippers broke open a close game in the fourth when they outscored the Rockets 30-10.

Knicks 117, Pistons 104

In Detroit, Julius Randle had 42 points and 15 rebounds as New York extended its winning streak against Detroit to

11 games.

Detroit hasn't beat the Knicks since Nov. 6, 2019, the end of its eight-game winning streak over New York.

Jalen Brunson added 27 points for the Knicks and Immanuel Quickley added 17.

Jaden Ivey had 21 points, six rebounds and six assists for the Pistons and Saddiq Bey added 21 points.

Thunder 112, Nets 102

In New York, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander and Josh Giddey each scored 28 points to lead Oklahoma City over Brooklyn.

Lu Dort added 22 points for the Thunder, who earned a three straight win to wrap up a road trip to the East and improved to 21-23.

Brooklyn dropped its second straight loss since losing Kevin Durant to a sprained knee ligament. Seth Curry scored 23 points and Nic Claxton recorded his team-best 12th double-double of the season with 17 points and 12 rebounds.

Claxton also had four blocks, which stretched his streak of games with at least three to eight. The franchise record is 11 by Shawn Bradley, who did it twice in the 1995-96 season.

Kings 132, Spurs 119

In San Antonio, Harrison Barnes scored 29 points, Domantas Sabonis had 18 points and 18 rebounds, and Sacramento extended its winning streak to four games with a victory over San Antonio.

De'Aaron Fox added 23 points and Davion Mitchell had 19 points for Sacramento. The Kings remain atop the Pacific Division, having won seven of 10.

San Antonio, which has lost four straight, was led by Jakob Poeltl's 23 points. Josh Richardson added 21 points and Keldon Johnson had 20.

MIAMI (AP)—The home of the Miami Heat has yet another name: Miami-Dade Arena.

That will be the temporary moniker for the building where the NBA team plays its home games, while the search for a more permanent naming-rights partner commences.

The Heat and Miami-Dade County announced the new name Friday, two days after a bankruptcy court terminated the county's naming rights deal with collapsed cryptocurrency exchange FTX. A county official had said earlier in the week that it would be referred

Miami Heat home arena gets temporary name after FTX collapse

to as "the Arena," though those plans quickly changed.

"Effective immediately, Miami-Dade County and the Miami Heat have agreed that, until such time as there is a new naming rights partner, to refer to the arena as Miami-Dade Arena," the parties said in a joint statement. "The removal of the facility's existing signage and the change-over of branding elements will be ongoing in the coming weeks."

The process of removing

FTX branding from all aspects of the arena will take some time. The company's logo appears on the court, is on many of the entrances, is embroidered on the shirts many security and in-game personnel wear, is on the arena roof and even was placed on the swipe cards that employees use to access the facility.

The county asked for the naming rights deal to be terminated in November, saying at the time that continuing to

refer to the building as FTX Arena will only add to the "enduring hardships" brought on by the collapse of the cryptocurrency exchange.

The county owns the arena and negotiated what was to be a 19-year, \$135 million naming rights deal with FTX. The Heat — who have played in the building since Jan. 2, 2000 — were to receive \$2 million annually as part of that deal, which went into effect in June 2021. The county and the Heat say they will

work together to find a new naming partner.

Before the FTX deal, the building had been referred to as AmericanAirlines Arena since its opening in 1999. The airline giant, which has a hub in Miami, said in 2019 that it would not renew its deal past the expiration date of Jan. 1, 2020. The airline's name remained on the building until 2021.

FTX was the third-largest cryptocurrency exchange, though it ended up with billions of dollars' worth of loss-

es — estimates range from \$8 billion to \$10 billion — before seeking bankruptcy protection after a spectacular crash that took only a few days.

Its founder, Sam Bankman-Fried, 30, was arrested last month in the Bahamas and extradited to the U.S. to face criminal charges in what U.S. Attorney Damian Williams has called "one of the biggest frauds in American history." Bankman-Fried has been released on bail and is scheduled to go on trial in October. He has pleaded not guilty.

Bae wins Fil-Taga December Ace



MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Hak Chon Bae qualified for Fil-Taga Golfers Association's season-ending Fil-Taga Ace of Aces Tournament after topping the December Ace of the Month held last Dec. 17 at the Kingfisher Golf Links in Talafofo.

Bae shot a net score of 70 in a tie with January Ace winner Mike Cruz. He actually fired a gross score of 86, which minus his 16 handicap, gave him the

score to beat in the last tourney of Fil-Taga for the year.

Cruz, meanwhile, was the first qualifier for the 2023 Fil-Taga Ace of Aces Tournament after capturing the January Ace also last Dec. 17.

The 74-year-old club pioneer also shot a gross score of 70 after carding a gross of 89. Cruz has a 19 handicap.

"I dedicate this win to the past, current, and future members of Fil-Taga Golfers Association. Truly they are the strength of the organization," he said.

Cruz said the conditions last Dec. 17 were acceptable. "The weather is fine with intermittent drizzle. To my fellow senior golfers, hey guys keep on golfing as it's good exercise for the body and the mind."

Ruben Avendano finished third in the December/January tourney with a 73.

Other Fil-Taga members who took part in the tourney, with their scores in parenthesis, were Freddie Cataluna (net 73), Jhun Cayetano (net 74), Jess Yumul (net 75), Lito Mendoza (net 77), Henry Bautista

(net 77), Das Krishnan (net 79), and Ed Varias (net 80). Par 3 winners were Krishnan and Cruz (twice).

With the December win, Bae now joins Mike Cruz (January), Lito Mendoza (February), Dan Ganacias (March), Freddie Cataluna (April), Varias (May), Romy Cayetano (June), Jess Yumul (July), Das Krishnan (August), Ronnie Santos (September), William Retardo (October) and Will Maui (November) for the season-ending Fil-Taga Ace of Aces Tournament.



New season of Roccball kicks off

The indigenous sport of Roccball began its 40th season of annual games at the Marianas High School Gymnasium. This year there are eight teams in competition for the playoffs: Nakama, Tomodachi, I'd Hit That, Phan Gotte, Lotus, Bandits, Sufa, and Dusty Feetz.

The first of seven rounds of competition of four games per week ended last Friday, Jan. 13. The Roccball games are played

at MHS from 11:30am and end after three sets of play are completed. The team that wins the third set of play with the most game points scored wins the game.

In the first round of play, last year's veteran teams Tomodachi and Nakama won their first games.

The heavy hitter of the game between Tomodachi and I'd

Hit That was Jerome Manzon of Tomodachi. Manzon scored six aces and three goals. In the game between Nakama and Phan Gotte, players from both teams scored in all of Roccball's scoring techniques

that include court points, aces, xunks, jam, kee, and goals. Josiah Cruz of Phan Gott was the game's heavy hitter with four aces and one goal.

In the games between first-year teams Lotus and Sufa and Dusty Feetz and Bandits, Lotus defeated Sufa and the Bandits defeated Dusty Feetz. Nohel Simina of Dusty Feets and Mino Chuweiluk of Sufa were their team's heavy hitters in those games. (PR)



RAIN

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6-4, 6-1.

In the boys 14, Wessel will take on Yutaka Kadokura and Jhun Park will square off against Siwoo Lee in the semis.

Wessel won against Jai Lee, 6-0, 6-0; Kadokura overcame Taher Shakir, 6-1, 6-2; Park got the better of Kiwon Lee, 6-4, 6-1; while Siwoo Lee beat Ian Chae, 6-3, 6-2.

In the girls 14, Anne Lee, Hannah Chae, and Lina Tsukagoshi are all in a dead heat with 2 points apiece.

Lee so far beat Tsukagoshi, 6-1, 6-1; Chae blanked Stella Choi, 6-0, 6-0; and Tsukagoshi came back from the loss against Lee by defeating

Choi, 6-1, 6-1.

Ryan Choi, Michael Jeon, Seungwoo Lee, and Jinho Park made it to the Final Four of the boys 12.

Top seed Choi advanced after winning against Daniel Kang, 6-0, 6-0, Jeon was a 6-1, 7-5 victor against Matt Zhu. Lee edged Haoyang Song, 6-3, 6-4, while second seed Park beat Yoosung Choi, 6-4, 6-0.

In the girls 12, Emma Lang, Jenna Pascual, Chlorie Lee, and Vivian Chung are the last four standing.

Top seed Lang got a bye in the first round, while Pascual blanked Scarlett Burrell, 6-0, 6-0. Lee won by the same score against Selina Chi, while second seed Chung also got a free ride to the quarters.

SIS Student Council Tennis Tournament coordinator Serin Chung said Mother Nature didn't give them any favors in the first weekend of the competition.

"It's been really difficult because of the rain. Hopefully, we will get to play all the matches next week."

Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association president Jeff Race, who helps Chung run the tournament, said they tried their best to wrap up the juniors competition through Martin Luther King Jr. Day yesterday but to no avail.

"Play for today is finished due to the weather. Any junior matches not played this weekend will be played next weekend, Friday night, Saturday, and Sunday," he said in the NMI Tennis chat group.

She was followed by Rosemarie Chisato with a time of 25:50 and Terra Allen completed the Top 3 with a time of 27:18.

The Inaugural Run Saipan Trinity '23 was a three-day running event to kickstart the club's yearlong calendar of races. The next Run Saipan race on Feb. 18 is the 3rd Annual Marianas Ekiden which is a 21-kilometer relay from Micro Beach in Garapan to just before Pacific Islands Club Saipan in San Antonio and back.

Results of the overall champions for all three races will be posted in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune*.

sion with times of 26:43 and 33:45, respectively.

Veloria and Bang topped the third and last day of races which spanned 5K of the Beach Road Pathway starting across the Modern Stationary and turning around at OhMyGrill.

With a time of 20:21, Veloria came in first overall, followed by Chad Taflinger with a time of 22:01, and Chong Nam Lee came in third with a time of 22:54. Veloria missed Day 2 because of church.

Starting and ending the three-day race with a bang, was Ann Bang, who clocked in for the Oleai 5K at 24:55.

BUCO

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gled, but I was happy when I finished because there were lots of people who cheered me on at the finish line."

She added that with running up the 474-meter or 1,555-foot mountain, runners definitely "need to exert a lot of effort and train running a lot to strengthen their legs."

In the first 5K up Mt. Tapochao dubbed Run Saipan Underground 5K 21.3 last April 2021, Marshall Hoskins and Denise Myers topped the men's and women's divi-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The 40th season of the CNMI's indigenous sport of Roccball unfurled last Friday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

2022

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pandemic."

One highlight of 2022 was "for our young players who had the opportunity to travel and compete in Jordan and Australia," said Zapanta.

The NMI U20 Men's National Soccer Team competed in the Asian Football Confederation U20 Asian Cup Qualifiers in Amman, Jordan last September, while the NMI U17 Boys National Team played in the AFC U17 Asian Cup 2023 Qualifiers held in Shepparton, Australia last October.

There are more than one highlights for the NMIFA as 2022 was definitely a big year for soccer in the CNMI, (and globally with the return of the FIFA World Cup). "For NMIFA, I'd say our highlight is the inauguration of our second soccer pitch and the hosting of the EAFF 68th Executive Committee meeting. The new pitch will increase our pro-

grams capacity and allow for further growth and development while NMIFA can take pride in hosting leaders of soccer powerhouses, stakeholders and friends who've supported NMIFA's development. It was great that they visited and had the opportunity to witness the work put in by NMIFA with their support."

"We continue to focus on the growth of our grassroots programs to reinforce our values of good health and wellbeing through sport. With the anticipated growth in participation and now having a new field to utilize, we shall find ways to improve our efficiency to better manage all soccer activities for the NMI," he said.

As for what the soccer community can look forward to in 2023, Zapanta said that NMIFA is looking to "kick off the year with various courses before our spring leagues kick-off."

One big competition that 2023 has in store will be for the

NMIFA's young women soccer players "to travel to Palestine and Thailand for the 2024 AFC U20 and U17 Women's Qualifiers in the first half, while likely switching focus to the Pacific Games toward the end of the year."

Zapanta then thanked all of NMIFA's partners, soccer clubs, and volunteers. "NMIFA would like to thank the hard working member soccer clubs and their volunteers who are the core of NMIFA's programs. [The Public School System] has been a great partner as well, working together for interscholastic soccer. To our sponsors; Triple J Motors, Take Care Insurance, Tan Siu Lin Foundation, Dove/D&Q Distributors, we appreciate their continued support through 2023. For other interested parties looking to partner or work with NMIFA, our facility welcomes you and can be contacted at 234-0173 or email playsoccer@nmifa.com."



Hubbard's 98-yard
fumble return
lifts Bengals over
Ravens
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Saipan Tribune Sports

Bae wins
Fil-Taga
December Ace
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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Rain delay plagues 1st week of SIS tourney

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Chants of “rain, rain go away” didn’t help as the 2023 SIS Student Council Tennis Tournament will need another weekend to conclude the junior portion of its competition at the American Memorial Park.

The annual sports fundraiser for the Saipan International School’s student council endured stop-and-go scenarios the entire weekend, forcing organizers to continue the finals and semifinals of the divisions to Week 2 when adult netters take the spotlight.

In the boys 18, top seed David Kwon will face second seed Wataru Kadokura in the finals.

Kwon advanced after beating Jack Linden in the semis, 6-0, 6-1. Kadokura booked a ticket to the championship round after defeating Daniel Kang via walkover.

No. 1 seed Yabin Shin will then take on No. 2 Seiyul

Hong in the girls 18. The former advanced with a 6-1, 6-0 win over Seohee Lee, while the latter won by the same score against Olivia Wang in their own semis tiff.

In the boys 16, making it to the Final Four are top seed Simon Tang, Nason Wessel, Cody Shimizu, and June Yu.

Tang got a bye in his first round assignment, while Wessel outlasted Siwoo Lee, 6-7, 6-1, 10-6. Shimizu was a 6-3, 6-1 victor over Henry Choi, while Yu also had a bye in the first round.

Anne Lee leads the girls 15 after beating Hannah Chae,

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MARK RABAGO

The reflection of players of the SIS Student Council Tennis Tournament is seen on the rain-soaked surface of the American Memorial Park tennis court yesterday moments before Week 1 of the competition was called off.

2022 finally saw full schedule of CNMI soccer competitions



NMIFA

The NMIFA's Kohtar Sangel Goto, middle, and Dev Bachani, right, go up against a Syria player in Game 2 of the Asian Confederation U20 Asian Cup Qualifiers in Amman, Jordan.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER



After the easing of COVID-19 restrictions in 2022, the Northern Marianas Football Association has finally seen a successful full schedule of soccer com-

petitions locally and internationally.

With that, a high rating of 9 on a scale of 1 to 10 was given to the association by NMIFA executive director Ruselle Zapanta. “There is always room for growth and improvement in how NMIFA operates, especially coming out of the COVID-19

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Buco, Chisato, Veloria, Bang win Day 2 and 3

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Joel Buco and Rosemarie Chisato trekked the fastest up the unforgiving inclines of Mt. Tapochau—the highest peak of Saipan—on Day 2 of the Inaugural Run Saipan Trinity ‘23.

And to cap off the three-day running event, Sildrey Veloria and Ann Bang, both of whom won Day 1, made it back to the top on Day 3.

The second day of the Trinity race series saw the return of

a 5K race up to Mt. Tapochau after two years, with Buco rolling up the mountain first with a time of 31:36. Chad Taflinger clocked in second with a time of 32:49, followed by Theo Rodgers who clocked in at 33:01.

Buco was a tough nut to crack in this foot race even as he said in Filipino that the Trinity race was the first he’s joined. Originally a competitive road biker, Buco said he just wanted to try out running, and that he can now say that he has successfully

finished all three races.

The almost 50-year-old Buco joined all three race days and said that during the first race, it was tough on him because those who joined were all fast runners. But, he told himself that for the lung-busting 5K summit up Mt. Tapochau, he will redeem himself, and that he did after he won first overall.

In the women’s division, Rosemarie Chisato finally claimed first after falling short on the first race day, as she

conquered the mountain with a time of 36:33. Ann Bang came in a close second with a time of 37:21 and Jessica Ortizo completed the Top 3 with a time of 38:42.

Even with the literal uphill battle in the Mt. Tapochau 5K, Chisato still managed to push herself even though it was tough, as she said in Filipino that she was just thinking about how she would eventually get to the finish line. She said that it was hot in the beginning of the run “that’s why I strug-

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Veloria



Chisato



Buco



Bang